

THEOLOGICAL MODELS OF BIBLICAL HOLISM
WITH REFERENCE TO THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES IN AFRICA

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BY
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To
Hugh Philpott, a fellow pilgrim along the rocky road to biblical holism,
and
Deryck Sheriffs, a long-time friend and supporter.

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Bill Houston

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis project was to investigate the curricula of certain degree conferring evangelical theological colleges in Africa (the investigation was limited to seminaries in sub-Saharan Africa) to assess to what extent they were preparing students to minister within the context of those realities. To do this, a list of commonly accepted perceptions of those realities was established. This was followed by a brief discussion of the possible causes of Africa's woes.

The hypothesis was that the very evangelical tradition that fuelled the faith mission movement that gave birth to many national churches in Africa, in fact, carried with it the fatal flaw of dualism. The history of evangelicalism was therefore examined, together with a scrutiny of the common core of evangelical beliefs.

The antidote to dualism, it is asserted, is biblical holism. Four theological models from four different authors, each representing a different theological discipline, were presented and assessed. Together, they form a very strong basis for holism that is true to the biblical revelation.

KEY WORDS

African realities, curriculum, contextualisation, dualism, evangelical, evangelicalism, faith missions, fundamentalism, holism, theological education, world views.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

The writing of this thesis project has pulled together threads of my life over some 35 years of ministry. From 1973 to 1986 I was involved with an evangelical student campus ministry that was affiliated to the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. Those were the dark years of apartheid with its systemic injustice, its repression of dissent, its low intensity civil war and, tragically, with the theological legitimization of the policy of apartheid. As we tried to grapple with the issues of injustice, we found ourselves being criticised by evangelicals for ‘having gone political’. This was despite the fact that there was campus evangelism, an effective world missions programme, small group bible studies and focussed discipleship activities. We were in fact trying to reflect biblically and theologically on the social system.

The evangelical tradition, as expressed in the evangelical and Pentecostal denominations in South Africa, was of no help in this quest. Some of those denominations were gracious enough to submit formal apologies to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which was set up after the first democratic elections in 1994 to investigate apartheid era atrocities. The writings of Latin American theologians such as Rene Padilla

and Samuel Escobar, and Americans such as Howard Yoder¹, Ron Sider², and Waldron Scott³ provided me with some biblical answers.

From 1986 to the present time, I have been involved in theological education, for six years in England and for fourteen years in South Africa. Most recently, my new work since 2005 takes me as a consultant to thirty-four evangelical seminaries in sub-Saharan Africa. All these seminaries are preparing men and women to minister in the context of Africa. It is an immense privilege for me to come alongside theological educators who are serving the Lord in often very difficult circumstances.

This continent of Africa is fraught with problems of human suffering on a huge scale. It is the only continent that has become poorer over the past twenty years. It has the highest number in internal refugees and displaced persons. It has had more than its fair share of abusive and corrupt leaders. Long-running civil wars have eroded economies and given rise to brutalized child soldiers. Some two million people are said to have died in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly called Zaire) during that civil war from hunger and from military activity.

The author's personal experience has informed the choice of this topic for research. This is because he have been able to combine what he sees as a need in the evangelical church for a biblical/theological underpinning of holistic ministry, together with the training that is needed to produce people who can effectively address the socio-political

¹ Yoder, J. H. *The Politics of Jesus*. Grand Rapids:Eerdmans, 1972..

² Sider, Ron *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*..London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977.

³ Scott, Waldron. *Bring Forth Justice*. Grand Rapids:Eerdmans,1980.

realities as evangelicals in a holistic way. The Micah Network has produced a definition of Integral Mission (this is an acceptable alternative term to holistic mission) in 2001⁴.

“Integral mission or holistic transformation is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. It is not simply that evangelism and social involvement are to be done alongside each other. Rather, in integral mission our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life. And our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ. If we ignore the world we betray the word of God which sends us out to serve the world. If we ignore the word of God we have nothing to bring to the world. Justice and justification by faith, worship and social action, the spiritual and the material, personal change and structural change belong together. As in the life of Jesus, being, doing and saying are at the heart of our integral task.”

The seminary where the writer taught in South Africa from 1992 to 2005 started a ministry to train local congregations to understand, and care for, AIDS sufferers both in and outside of their congregations. Eight years ago we encountered resistance from African ministers, partly because talking about sex was a cultural taboo subject, but also because these evangelical ministers said that they ‘preached a spiritual gospel and did not mess with that sort of thing’. (The tide has turned today, not because the ministers have changed their theology, but because they are burying their members at such a rate that they have asked for help.)

⁴ The Micah Network brings together over 300 relief, development and justice organizations around the world. In September 2001 at a conference in Oxford the *Micah Declaration on Integral Mission* was produced. For more information visit <www.micahnetwork.org>

The claimed percentage of Christians in some African countries is high and is sometimes given as reason for satisfaction at the spread of the gospel. And rightly so! There is a worrying downside however. Why, in Rwanda, with a claimed Christian population of 89.9%, did the church not prevent the genocide of 800 000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu in just 100 days in 1994?⁵ Why, if the church is so very strong in Nigeria, do Christians not prevent rampant corruption? Why, in South Africa during the apartheid era was the evangelical voice not heard in opposition to a patently unjust racist regime? Why is the pandemic of AIDS not more self-limiting to the non-Christian populations? These questions beg the observation that Christians seem unable, or unwilling, to act as salt and light (Matthew 5:13) in their communities as Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount. Is the gospel actually transforming believers? Perhaps today the prosperity gospel is undermining the ethical demands inherent in following Christ. Perhaps it is because the Christian message is preached as a private and personal one and the believers have no theological tools to use when reflecting on socio-political realities.

In November 2003, while I was still lecturing at the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa, I organized a conference on ‘AIDS and the Curriculum’. It was funded by the Overseas Council International and sponsored by the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA). About 100 people from 40 seminaries and Bible Colleges in Africa attended the conference. What was truly stunning was the fact that only four or five schools said that they had a training course on HIV/AIDS in their curricula. And these 40 schools were all preparing people to minister in Africa, the epicentre of the

⁵ See Rittner, C. et al. (eds) *Genocide in Rwanda, Complicity of the Churches?* Minnesota: Paragon House, 2004 has a distressing analysis of the role of the Church during those dark days.

AIDS pandemic! That experience set me thinking and those questions formed the basis of my research for this thesis project.

Research Questions

1. What of our evangelical heritage has been a help or a hindrance to us being able to develop a holistic theology?
2. Are there any existing models of Biblical holism to draw on?
3. Do the curricula of the degree-giving evangelical schools in Africa address the major African realities in order adequately to prepare pastors for this context?
4. What changes, if any, to the curricula might be recommended in the light of the above findings?

This D Min programme is all about transforming leadership. It is about leaders making a difference. I would want to see the next generation of ministers who emerge from our seminaries in Africa being equipped to make a difference in their communities, while at the same time maintaining a passion for the evangelistic mandate to fulfil the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

The order of this thesis project has an internal logic. In Chapter 2 I will first examine the evangelical heritage in its historical origins, the definition of terms, the core beliefs, the varieties of expressions of evangelicalism, the distinction between evangelicalism and fundamentalism, and finally there will be some discussion around the tension between advocates of social action versus the primacy of evangelism. The intention is to develop a

thorough understanding of our evangelical heritage in order to locate evangelical seminaries in Africa within this tradition, and so to shed light on possible reasons for the shape and content of their curricula today.

In Chapter 3, I will provide the theological framework for this research by examining four existing models of biblical holism. First I will discuss the set of theological pairings of great doctrines used by John Stott in his *New Issues facing Christians Today* in which he pleads for a ‘fuller doctrine of...’. For example Stott calls for a fuller doctrine of God as a ‘God of Creation as well as the Covenant’. The second model will be that of the Kingdom of God as used by Viv Grigg in his *Companion of the Poor*. The missiological model of the Missio Dei as developed by David Bosch will be the third model. We will end by examining the model used by Chris Wright in his *Living as the People of God*.

These four works are written by evangelicals and should provide a strong theological and biblical foundation from which to move forward to engage with the realities of Africa. The literature review will be built into these two chapters because it is integral to them.

In Chapter 4, we will examine the debates around the notion of contextualization of theological education. Some critical reflection on the literature pertaining to contextualization will be conducted in order to expose the presuppositions behind my assumptions regarding education and the curriculum. This debate, and where evangelicals are in it, is crucial to my assumption of the importance of biblical holism. But what

exactly is that context? I will derive a set of agreed statements, taken from Christian and secular sources, of the most common pressing issues facing Africans today in order to assess the extent to which the schools prepare their students to make an impact on those realities.

In chapter 5, I will describe the research methodology I used in the Questionnaire that was given to the presidents of the 34 partner seminaries in Africa of the Overseas Council. I will analyse the data gathered on the Overseas Council's partner schools in sub-Saharan Africa to look for evidence of holistic training of students in preparation for ministry in the context of Africa.

In Chapter 6 we will draw some conclusions and make recommendations as to the way forward for the seminaries, while at the same time reflecting on my personal learning points. I will also suggest further courses of action for me to take with regard to this research.

CHAPTER TWO

EVANGELICALISM REVISITED. A LITERATURE REVIEW

I stand within the evangelical tradition. The organisation with which I work is evangelical, and it partners with one hundred evangelical seminaries around the world. This dissertation is concerned with the training of ministers of the gospel in evangelical, degree-awarding seminaries in Africa. There is, however, an increasing problem with the term evangelical because it is losing its ability to define the movement today because of an erosion of meaning and imprecise usage. One hears, for example, reference made to an ‘evangelical meeting’ when what was meant was an evangelistic meeting. It is therefore necessary to begin this project by defining the term ‘evangelical’ and by laying down the markers of distinctive evangelical doctrines which have characterized the movement.

The subjects of the research, namely the evangelical seminaries in Africa, are located within the evangelical tradition. By providing defining traits and beliefs and the background historical roots to this heritage, we will better understand the ethos of the seminaries, their traditions and concerns today and why their curricula reflect those traditions.

2.1 Defining Terms

Labels may be a help or a hindrance. They may helpfully define or unhelpfully confine. They may become dated when a semantic shift of meaning occurs or when the

connotations associated with the label in peoples' minds change. They may be worn as a badge of honour or used as a label of dismissive derision.

We should first distinguish the meaning of some words that sound similar and are sometimes confused, especially by those outside of the tradition.⁶

Evangelical (*noun*).

A person who believes the historic truths of the Christian faith, as set out in the Bible, and is committed to living out their implications.

Evangelicalism (*noun*).

The overall evangelical movement, their beliefs and activities.

Evangelism (*noun*).

The activity of sharing the Christian faith, with the aim that others will become followers of Jesus Christ.

Evangelist (*noun*).

A person involved in sharing the Christian faith. A role officially recognized by most Christian denominations and often a person's full-time vocation.

Evangelise (*verb*).

⁶ What follows has been taken from *Who do Evangelicals think they are?*, an undated booklet by C. Calver, I. Coffey and P. Meadows and published by the Evangelical Alliance of Britain.

The act of sharing the good news about Jesus, with the aim that others will become followers of Jesus Christ.

Evangelistic (*adjective*).

A description given to an activity which has the aim of communicating the Christian message.

The word evangelical comes from the evangel, or ‘gospel.’ Stackhouse writes (2002:48): “Evangelicals prize the classic good news of God being in Christ, reconciling the world to himself.” John Stott puts it thus (1999:29): “In seeking to define what it means to be evangelical, it is inevitable that we begin with the gospel. For both our theology (evangelicalism) and our activity (evangelism) derive their meaning from the good news (the evangel).”

2.2 The Historical Roots of Evangelicalism

It will be helpful to unpack the history of the term evangelical. But first, a disclaimer is in order. ‘Evangelicalism is too loose a designation ever to have produced a tidy historical record.... Difficulties notwithstanding, it is possible to present a coherent history of evangelicalism as defined by genealogy and by principle’ (Noll. 2004:17).

2.2.1 Pre-Reformation roots

The term evangelical is not a new word. It has an amazingly long history which reveals a noble spiritual lineage that predates the Reformation, the commonly assumed fountainhead of evangelicalism.

“The root word was first used in the early Church as the Latin adjective ‘*evangelicus*’. In the fourth century, Augustine used it to declare that ‘the blood of the Christians is, as it were, the seed of the fruit of the Gospel’ (*semen fructum evangelicorum*)” (Calver and Warner. 1996:17).

John Wycliffe (1329-1384) has been called ‘the Morning Star’ of the Reformation and, in his lifetime, *doctor evangelicus*. When he died he left an unfinished manuscript titled ‘Opus Evangelicum.’ (Calver et al, Undated:6). His theology bore many of the traits of later evangelicalism. He, for instance, believed that Scripture proceeded from the mouth of God and was therefore superior in authority to the pope, the church or the teaching of the church fathers. He rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation, the cult of saints, Mariology and the sale of indulgences.

Another great orthodox leader in England was Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), the Archbishop of Canterbury, who wrote the Book of Common Prayer. In 1537 he wrote of “one sound, pure, evangelical doctrine, comfortable to the discipline of the primitive church.” (Calver and Warner. 1996:16). Cranmer described justification by faith alone as

‘the strong rock and foundation of Christian religion’ and as such differed from Roman Catholic theology.

The word evangelical was used for a spiritual movement in the 1520s among the Italian aristocratic laity which placed an emphasis on personal salvation. This spirituality emerged from the Italian Benedictine monasteries during the late fifteenth century.⁷ “The Italian church in particular was deeply and positively affected by evangelical attitudes during the 1530s” (McGrath. 1993:12).

2.2.2 The Reformation

Martin Luther (1483-1546) is regarded as the father of the Reformation. He had never intended to form a new denomination, he only wished to reform the church and purge it of abuses. Luther was the champion of *sola fide* (faith alone), *sola gratia* (grace alone), *sola Scriptura* (the Bible alone). Luther believed in the priesthood of all believers in opposition to the ‘closed shop’ of clericalism. He affirmed the right of the individual to interpret scripture conscientiously while denying the authority of the pope as the final interpreter, and he reduced the number of sacraments from seven to two. These are foundational tenets of belief for evangelicals to this day. However, in Europe over time, the word evangelical became associated with being a Lutheran. The Calvinist wing of the reformation was never labelled as evangelical. By the seventeenth century, in the German language, *evangelisch* became synonymous with the word Protestant, which also came to mean being anti-Catholic. The very term Protestant has a negative connotation of protesting against something. In its historical context it also carried a political overtone of the protest by the six princes and fourteen south German cities at the second Diet of

⁷ See A. McGrath is the only author among those I have cited who refers to this period.

Worms against the rescinding of the guarantees of religious freedom. Nevertheless, “The Reformation remains a focus and defining point of reference for evangelicalism today, as it seeks to ensure that the central themes of the Reformation - such as the doctrine of justification by faith alone and the Scripture principle - remain deeply embedded in the evangelical consciousness.” (McGrath. 1993:15).

2.2.3 Puritanism

Puritanism in England, beginning in the late sixteenth century during the reign of Elizabeth I, contributed to evangelicalism through the Calvinist writings of John Owen, Richard Baxter and others. The general aim was to complete a Calvinist reformation in England and to produce a Reformed nation. There was an emphasis on personal regeneration, sanctification, prayer and strict morality. John Bunyan’s *Pilgrims Progress* exemplified these themes in that enduring and influential book. The bible was held to be the only valid source of doctrine, liturgy and personal religion. This influence was spread to the new colony of America through the exodus of Puritans to Massachusetts after 1630. Separatist non-conformity was born at this time when the Puritans finally lost their political ascendancy after the return of the monarchy following the Cromwellian period *circa* 1640. The Puritan influence can be seen in the work of Jonathan Edwards and preaching of C. H. Spurgeon and, in later twentieth-century scholars and preachers like Dr Martin Lloyd Jones and J. I. Packer. “There was an ‘...intellectual strength and coherence of this theological tradition...” (Ferguson and Wright. 1988:551).

2.2.4 Pietism

Pietism was the next movement to influence evangelicalism. Pietism arose in Germany in the seventeenth century under the leadership of Philipp Spener (1635-1705), Herman Francke (1633-1727) and others. It shaped evangelicalism and gave it many of its familiar traits. “Pietism (and later English Methodism) fostered a desire for vibrant personal religion coupled with a social consciousness in the midst of the dead orthodoxy of the state churches” (Grenz. 1993:23). There was a focus on the transformed heart leading to holy living. The role of laity became more important as an outworking of the belief in the priesthood of all believers. The now familiar elements of prayer, worship, bible study and fellowship were hallmarks of Pietism. Having a testimony of conversion was more important than formal church membership by virtue of the sacrament of baptism. “Do these emphases sound familiar?” writes Bock (2002:43). “They belong to our heritage”. The Pietists did not seek a pure church but, more realistically, a ‘church within a church’, consisting of groups of people who had a testimony of personal conversion. Here lie the roots of pietistic dualism because “It gave evangelicalism its clear focus on the personal and individual dimensions of faith, but its roots also softened a concern for the more corporate dimensions of a believer’s walk with God.” (Bock, 2002:44)⁸. Pietism had its greatest influence in England in the eighteenth century through its influence on John and Charles Wesley.

The modern missionary movement began as a consequence of Pietism, first as a trickle, and later as a force, that eventually changes the complexion of the world Church.

⁸ M. Noll (2004:15) concurs when he writes ‘ As we see later in this book, the European pietist movement played a significant role in the beginning of evangelical movements in Britain, and the main themes of pietism anticipated the main themes of evangelicalism.’

H Kane asserts that “The modern missionary movement began in Europe as the direct outcome of the Pietist movement which began in Germany following the Thirty Years’ War, which ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648” (Kane. 1978:76). Despite opposition from churches, the Danish Halle mission was able to send out its first missionaries in 1705 to Tranquebar in South East India. The centre of gravity of continental missions soon shifted to the Moravians under the able leadership of Count Zinzendorf, who had also been influenced by the Pietists at Halle. The Moravian church was founded in 1724 “and soon developed into one of the greatest missionary churches in all history” (Tucker. 1983:69). Numerous mission fields were opened up within the space of twenty years: The Virgin Islands (1732), Greenland (1733), Surinam (1735), The Gold Coast and South Africa (1737), North American Indians (1740), Jamaica (1754), Antigua (1756). In fact “Within twenty years of the commencement of their missionary work the Moravian Brethren had started more missions than Anglicans and Protestants had started during the two preceding centuries” (Kane. 1978:79). The Moravian influence was a major factor in the Evangelical Revival in Britain because John Wesley owed his conversion to the Moravian Peter Bohler.

Pietist missions elevated the principle of the self-supporting worker, which meant living by faith in dependence on God to supply one’s needs. In this model of mission there was no state-mission cooperation because the sending churches were not state churches. The Pietist ecclesiology made possible the rise of parachurch organizations that later formed the backbone of evangelical faith missions. This provided missionaries with some autonomy of movement as mission was conducted outside of the paradigm of

‘Christendom’ that rested on the foundation of there being a state church. Strongly evangelical, the movement considered Scripture to be the only rule of faith and conduct.

2.2.5 The Great Awakening and Revivalism

The Great Awakening was a series of revivals in the American colonies between 1726 and 1760. This was followed by a second movement from approximately 1787 to 1825 which was called the Second Great Awakening in America and the Evangelical Revival in England. “While the first Great Awakening was largely Calvinistic, in the Second Awakening evangelism and pragmatics were wed, along with pietistic Methodism less driven by a focus on divine decree than were the Reformers” (Bock. 2002:44).

The “Great Awakening” in the American colonies was largely Calvinistic and could be seen as the continuing influence of the Reformation.⁹ George Whitefield (1714-1770) and Jonathon Edwards (1703-1758) were the main catalysts. Whitefield and John Wesley (his Aldersgate experience was in May 1738 in which he felt his heart “strangely warmed”) were contemporaries in England and had both been members of ‘The Holy Club’ as students at Oxford University. Their association ended in conflict over their opposing views of the availability of salvation. Wesley took an Arminian interpretation and Whitefield, the Calvinistic. Wesley travelled thousands of miles on horseback and preached 40 000 sermons to ordinary people who were largely unchurched. He made the gospel relevant to miners and factory workers. He did not distinguish between home and foreign missions, believing that ‘All the world is my parish.’ Whitefield went to America where this supreme preacher had an enormous influence.

⁹ Following Mark Noll in *The Rise of Evangelicalism*. Leicester: IVP, 2004:15.

In the second Great Awakening in America the growing influence of Methodism is evident. Bosch cites other sources to say that “the Great Awakening terminated the Puritan and inaugurated the Pietist or Methodist age of American church history” (1991:278). The revivalists “... not only preached the gospel but were also moved to social concern (called moral reform then) for the poor, slaves, women and finally temperance.... These concerns for others emerged from a view of a life of holiness that was different from the way the world lived and that marked out the powerful, life-changing presence of the Spirit, including how others might be served” (Bock, 2002:45). These interconnected movements of unusual renewal in response to the preaching of the gospel were the beginnings of modern evangelicalism.

H. Kane maintains (1978:81) that the Pietist movement and the Evangelical awakening were not two separate and distinct movements but two phases of the same movement. The bridging figures were Wesley and Whitefield. Wesley had been deeply influenced by Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians, and Whitefield had studied the works of Francke.

However this period also coincides with the rise of rationalism which shook the foundation of intellectual thought of Europe and thus had an impact on the Christian church and its traditional beliefs. Added to that was the gradual disintegration of an assumed *Corpus Christianum* in the wake of multiplying denominations. Andrew Walls sees these factors as pointers towards “... the privatization of religion, its steady movement into the sphere of private judgement and personal decision. Intellectual and

social developments pointed in the same direction. An increasing individualization of consciousness (where ‘I think, therefore I exist’ can be an axiom), and an understanding of societies in terms of contracted mutual consent undermined the principle of territorial Christianity that had underlain Western Christianity (even in its Protestant form) since the time of the barbarian conversions” (1996:84).

The theology of Revivalism moved away from revival being a divine act, to something within the control of human beings.¹⁰ This would have been inconceivable to the eighteenth-century evangelists. The techniques of revivalism were developed in the American camp meetings and exported to England by the visit of D. L. Moody in 1873. “Even in the land of John Knox the solution to the problem of the ‘lapsed masses’ was now seen to rest in the use of humanly-devised techniques and the preaching of a message shorn of the doctrinal content of the, older, Reformed traditions” (Smith. 1998:62). The Moody missions failed to reach the working class and the venue put off the upper classes. Thus “the meetings were turning into a display of middle-class pietism” (Smith 1998:62). One spin-off was the emergence of meetings for the ‘deepening of spiritual life’ in which the experience of a ‘second blessing’ was offered. The Keswick Convention in the Lake District of England is the best example of this new spirituality that promoted practical holiness (understood in privatized terms), the indwelling and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, bible study, prayer, the enthusiastic promotion of world mission. The holiness emphasis of Keswick Conventions was exported to other countries and thus expanded the influence of pietistic evangelicalism.

¹⁰ It is very common even today to hear of African churches that hold ‘revival meetings’ as if the mere holding of a meeting will produce the result of revival.

2.2.6 The modern missionary movement

If the missionary movement began as a trickle because of Pietism, it grew into a flood because of revivalism. For A. Walls “The modern missionary movement is an autumnal child of the Evangelical Revival” (Walls. 1996:79). Revivalism, he writes, made no distinction between high-born nobility and South Sea islanders with respect to their common spiritual state and need of a saviour. “A consistent view of human solidarity in depravity shielded the first missionary generation from the worst excesses of racism” (Walls, 1996:79). The revivals also supplied logistic networks, interdenominational and international, that under-girded the movement. The revivals, most importantly, supplied missionaries who joined the new phenomenon of voluntary societies (as opposed to denominational mission efforts).

It is commonly held that William Carey (1761-1834) was the father of the faith mission movement. This is a convenient shorthand simplification of the facts because some mission societies were established before Carey. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England founded in 1649, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, organized in 1698, are but two examples.

However, from the time of Carey on, many mission societies were established in England and America. To name but a few:

The London Missionary Society (1795)

The Netherlands Missionary Society (1797)

The Church Missionary Society (1799)

The British and Foreign Bible Society (1804)

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810).

Throughout the nineteenth century mission agencies of various kinds were established.

Some of the well-known ones are:

The China Inland Mission (1865), now called the Overseas Missionary Fellowship

The Evangelical Alliance Mission (1890)

SIM International (1893)

The Africa Inland Mission (1895).

2.2.6.1 Types of mission agencies

Mission agencies fell into several categories. There were interdenominational ones such as the London Missionary Society. There were denominational ones like the Anglican Church Missionary Society. There were faith missions like the SIM¹¹ and then there were specialist missions based on a particular class of people or need such as the Leprosy Mission (other foci include student work, children's work, the blind, missions to seamen, orphans, etc.), or a particular method such as radio work or bible translation. This period coincided with the growth of trade routes, exploration, later European colonization as well as the energy released by the revivals.

¹¹ When SIM was founded the name was the Sudan Interior Mission. Today, following various mergers, the acronym was retained but the name was modernized and changed to Serving In Mission.

2.2.6.2 Characteristic theological dualism

We might note in passing that the rise of the Bible Institute movement in the 1880s, as an aftermath of the revivals, saw the formation of over two hundred bible institutes in Canada and the United States. These schools were an important source of evangelical missionaries offering for service abroad. One of them was founded by D. L. Moody in 1886 that had a mission's orientation with a holiness emphasis. "Moody Bible Institute has chalked up a fantastic record. Since 1890 over 5 800 Moody alumni have served under 255 mission boards in 108 countries of the world" (Kane. 1982:102). The bible institutes promoted the tenor of the revivals with an emphasis on the priority of seeking lost souls, withdrawal from the 'world', holiness cast in terms of personal sin, and the centrality of the individual in contrast to the group. All this combined to cause evangelicalism to drift into an implicit pietistic dualism in which the spiritual realm was given priority over the natural.

The Reformed, evangelical Bishop of Liverpool, J. C. Ryle, "deplored the tendency to focus on the personal and subjective aspects of Christianity to the exclusion of its social and objective character" (Smith 1998:63).

Bosch's monumental study of paradigm shifts in the theology of missions in his *Transforming Missions* writes of Pietism, "The separation between the 'secular' and the 'religious' was striking in the case of Pietism" (1991:276). This divide played out in the motives and goal of evangelical missions. Ruth Tucker writes (1983:290) "The 'faith' missionaries were motivated by a vivid picture of hell. For them, the purpose of missions

was to save lost souls from the eternal torment of hell-fire and brimstone.” While faith missionaries were not oblivious to the needs of those around them, and thus started medical, educational and social ministries, these were seen as a means to facilitate the spread of gospel. The main motive would have been the conversion of precious souls to Christ.

The faith mission movement was also largely associated with premillennial dispensationalism which held “that the condition of the world would in fact worsen until Jesus returned to usher in the millennium” (Robert, D. 1990:34). In this view then, human effort by way of a social gospel was a futile waste of effort, while the evangelisation of the world was clearly the top priority. Premillennialism was motivated by the belief that Christ would not return until the world had been evangelised. This eschatological urgency was a powerful motivating factor and led to waves of candidates offering for world mission.¹²

Andrew Walls is surely correct when he writes that (1996:85) “...the missionary movement has changed the face of Christianity. It has transformed the demographic and cultural composition of the church, with consequences not yet measurable for its future life and leadership and theology and worship.”

¹² See Weber, T. in Dayton, D. and R. Johnston *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*, Downers Grove: IVP, 1991 for a discussion on premillennialism and evangelicalism.

All the literature reviewed so far has been Eurocentric or, has at least, been dealing with the history of the 'north'.¹³ This body of literature does not address the modern faith mission movement which, in my view, is a very significant component of modern-day evangelicalism because it was responsible for the planting of the church in the new world.¹⁴ This church has grown to become numerically larger than the church in the erstwhile sending nations.

2.2.6.3 Majority world church growth

Much of this non-Western growth has been in the evangelical tradition, even in the mainline ecumenical denominations. When the world gathering of Anglicans met at Lambeth in 1988 and 1998, there was tension between the American Episcopalians who wanted to discuss gay marriage and sexuality, and the African bishops, who wanted to foreground evangelism.

The growth of the church in Africa, for example, has been spectacular; from 9 million in 1900 to 319 million in 1997.¹⁵ Patrick Johnstone (2001:3) expects that by 2025 some 83% of the world's evangelicals could be in the non-Western world. Another modern trend is the spectacular growth of Pentecostalism from zero in 1900 to 115 million in 2000. Add to that, the impact of the Charismatic movement on every denomination and

¹³ The typology of the 'North-South' is in reference here. Other designations such as the 'first world-third world', the 'developing world', or the 'majority world' might have been used. But each has its problems of imprecise definition. Some shorthand descriptive label that has common usage must be used and The North-South bipolar label that was first used in the Brandt Report in 1980 seems as good as any.

¹⁴ For a thorough study of faith missions in Africa see Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*. Oxford: Regnum, 1994.

¹⁵ Figures taken from M. Noll *Turning Points*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997 who in turn quotes D. Barrett in the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, January 1997.

their spawning of new denominations. Johnstone estimates this bloc to number 345 million in 2000.

2.2.6.4 A legacy of the faith missions movement

It was the missionary enterprise that sowed the seed of what has become today a thriving surge of church growth. The faith missions movement passed on its DNA to the younger churches in terms of theological commitments, attitudes and values. In an insightful article R Lang¹⁶ asserts (2001:351) “To understand both African spirituality and church renewal, then, it is imperative to pay close attention to the revival roots of Christianity in the African continent... Given that most, if not all of the North Atlantic hemisphere evangelical mission agencies that sent missionaries to Africa before the 1930s were fully embedded in the revival subculture, it is also true that the doctrine of holiness played a crucial role in shaping the nature of African Christianity. The task of explicating this phenomenon has not yet been fully explored.”

One person who has explored this phenomenon in West Africa is Jan Boer¹⁶. His contention is that the dualistic theology of faith missions (his research was limited to one, the Sudan United Mission) “...drove the mission to spend all its energies, resources and deep devotion on evangelism in the narrow sense of the word or on social projects that would serve as bait for the former.... She was so busy with ‘sacred’ matters that she lacked the inclination to bother herself with responsible analysis of developments in the ‘secular’ realm, too busy, not primarily because of lack of time, but because of this hierarchical dualism that relegates matters such as economics to the inferior rank of

¹⁶ Jan Boer. *Heralds of Capitalism or Christ?* Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1984.

‘natural’ (Boer, 1984:135). The consequence of this was a church that had no prophetic voice in public affairs, a mission that became entangled in colonialism because of no principled political thinking and an absent theology of social ministries.

The impact on the national church caused Boer to remark “I was surprised at how openly Nigerian Christians tend to separate their religion from the daily affairs of business, politics, and professional life. Though such separation is not new among Christians, how could this have come about in a community that arose in the bosom of African traditional religion and culture?” (1984:6).

Let it be said that dualism was not the only factor contributing to the separation of the spiritual and the material worlds. Many missionaries came from middle class backgrounds and assumed a liberal laissez faire economics. They would have imbibed the growing scientific rationalism of the day and its implicit social Darwinism. They came from countries where there was a separation of church and state coupled to the privatisation of religious experience. Theological dualism simply reinforced these tendencies.

A third assessment of evangelical dualism, this time from South Africa, is to be found in Evangelical Witness in South Africa (EWISA. 1986). This document was drawn up by 131, mainly black, evangelicals during the second state of emergency in South Africa. This group had formed ‘Concerned Evangelicals’ to give support to each other in those dark years of struggle against apartheid. Some of them had been disciplined by their

white led seminaries or denominations for being 'too political'. "Our own frustration was that our own churches, groups or organisations were almost lost and could not provide prophetic light in this situation. At worst, most would be supporting the status quo instead of being a conscience to the state" (EWISA. 1986:2).

The cause of this inaction had theological roots, one of which was dualism. I will quote sections at length in order to let their voice reveal the depth of concern expressed by the black evangelicals. "The consequence of this dualistic life has been disastrous for evangelical faith. This dualism enables one to live a pietistic 'spiritual' life and still continue to oppress, exploit, and dehumanize people. And those who are victims of this oppression, exploitation and dehumanisation are prohibited from complaining or resisting it because this would amount to worrying about the material things that have nothing to do with one's spirituality. Actually trying to engage in a struggle to get rid of this oppression is seen as having 'fallen' from grace. In this way the oppressors of this world are able to maintain their system by conveniently confining the gospel to the spiritual realm alone" (EWISA. 1986:9).

The evangelical church by and large had nothing to say to the apartheid regime. They had no theological tools with which to provide a theological critique. By being so-called neutral, they in effect supported the status quo. Romans chapter 13 was often quoted to call Christian to obey the State to counter acts of civil disobedience and protest. The prophetic voice came from the ecumenical movement and some Roman Catholics.

Three voices have been quoted, one from East Africa, one from West Africa and one from South Africa to support the view that evangelical dualism has been pervasive and has had dire consequences.

Some of the theological inadequacies of a pietistic holiness were later to have a catastrophic outworking in the Rwandan genocide. Following that event, a lot of soul-searching was done by theologians as to how and why this could have happened in a country that had experienced the impact of the East African Revival. Roger Bowen¹⁷ states that the East African Revival churches developed a ‘canon within a canon’ and failed to teach the whole counsel of God. “One of the ironies was that the movement that gave such strong emphasis to the doctrine of sin possessed a limited doctrine of sin. It was confined to private morality, ‘Don’t lie, drink, smoke, or commit adultery,’ but had no understanding of structural evil or corporate sin manifest in genocide.”

It is the contention of this dissertation that the churches planted by evangelical missions lack the theological tools with which to confront many of the daily African realities – hence the need for biblically-based theological models of holism. This need will be addressed in the next chapter.

¹⁷ R Bowen’s article ‘Revivalism and Ethnic Conflict’ appeared in *Transformation: an international evangelical dialogue on mission and ethics*. April/June 1995. This edition was largely devoted to reflections on the Rwandan genocide. See also C. Rittner et al. (eds) *Genocide in Rwanda. Complicity of the Churches* Minnesota: Paragon House, 2004 for sixteen articles on the subject.

2.2.7 Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism

In the years following the American Civil War, dramatic changes in the intellectual climate occurred in the United States. Evangelicals who had been very successful earlier in winning the expanding frontier, now faced the challenge of expanding urbanization. They were by and large ill-equipped to face the intellectual challenges of the urban centres. Sociological and psychological writings reduced religion to a mere social phenomenon. Emerging comparative religion studies raised questions about the uniqueness of Christ and Christianity. Darwinian biology seemed to do away with the need of a creator God. Higher critical studies undermined the authority of the Bible. The response of conservative Protestants was to move in one of three ways. “Some rejected the new intellectual currents more or less completely and refused to modify their inherited formulations at all. Others came to believe that the traditional expressions of the faith were completely outmoded and had to be replaced by views and practices seemingly demanded by a scientific world view.... A third stream tried hard to accommodate itself to the novel patterns of thought by adjusting elements of the inherited religious tradition accordingly” (Quebedeaux, 1974:5).

The polarization over these issues in the 1920s and 1930s was called the Fundamentalist-Modernist debate. McGrath, quoting J. D. Hunter (1988:20) defines the movement as “Fundamentalism is orthodoxy in confrontation with modernity” (1988:20).

Parallel with this debate was another development in which liberal ecumenical churches were becoming concerned with the living conditions associated with the

growing cities and factories. They emphasized the prophetic nature of the Old Testament together with a strong social ethic and an over-realized eschatology that considered it possible to usher in the Kingdom of God primarily by human effort working for socio-political reform. This was married to the optimism of the day and some of the socialist views from Europe. This heady mix was called the Social gospel.

The new intellectual trends were fiercely resisted by conservatives. Unfortunately the battles were often fought out in law courts and in heresy trials rather than in reasoned intellectual debate to capture the intellectual high ground. Conservative preachers were too ill-equipped to cope with the challenges or “they were too busy holding revivals and Bible conferences and defending the faith to be concerned with the social application of the Gospel... So, the stage was set for the showdown which came to be known as the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy” (Quebedeaux, 1974:8).

If the reaction among evangelicals to major cultural changes in America gave rise to fundamentalism and the resultant battles to regain control of a lost culture, in Britain, evangelicals “...knowing only too well that their beliefs had already been displaced at the centre of culture, retired to the Lake District to pursue an essentially non-controversialist piety in the Keswick Convention, focussing attention on personal holiness and quietly ignoring both socio-political concerns and uncomfortable questions concerning doctrinal purity of the denominations to which they belonged” (Smith 1998:77).

In explaining why British evangelicals avoid calling themselves fundamentalists, J. Packer writes of fundamentalism thus (1958:32): “They were by and large outclassed by their opponents in learning and ability.... As time went by, Fundamentalism withdrew more and more into the shell provided by its own inter-denominational organisations. Partly in self-defence, the movement developed an anti-intellectual bias: it grew distrustful of scholarship, sceptical as to the value of reasoning and truculent in its attitude towards the arguments of its opponents...Fundamentalism turned in on itself, limiting its interests to evangelism and the cultivation of personal religion....The fundamentalist episode has not been a happy chapter in the history of Evangelicalism.”

Fundamentalism’s war against modernity led to a defensive attitude that slid into separationism because, if culture and mainline denominations could not be reformed, there was no other option. One consequence of this was the increasing polarization within the broad stream of the evangelical movement. “The perceived ‘ghettoizing’ of fundamentalism in the aftermath of the infamous Scopes ‘monkey’ trial in 1925 led to the formation of a new coalition in the 1940s known as the neo-evangelical movement, or simply evangelicalism. By reviving this designation, the movement claimed for itself the mantle of the entire evangelical tradition” (Grenz. 2000: 85).

In the 1940s a group of leaders, including Carl Henry, Edward Carnell, Harold Ockenga, and Bernard Ramm, broke away from fundamentalism to form the new movement. They were distinguished from fundamentalism in at least three ways.¹⁸ First, they rejected the separatism of fundamentalism and sought dialogue with liberals.

¹⁸ Following H. Knight.. *A Future for Truth*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1997 page 32.

Second, they rejected the old anti-intellectualism by engaging with issues of science and culture. Thirdly, they made a case for evangelical social concern. They set about strengthening the movement by establishing supportive institutions like Fuller Theological Seminary, the magazine Christianity Today and the National Association of Evangelicals. Other facets of the movement began to emerge. Billy Graham gave expression to the revivalist element of evangelicalism, but with an openness that did not characterize fundamentalism. “He insisted that every effort should be made to enlist the cooperation and participation of all the churches in the area where the crusade was being held, including those more liberal in theology as well as traditional fundamentalist” (Erickson, M. 1998:15).

Neoevangelicalism drew together people of diverse backgrounds, some who had roots in fundamentalism, some conservatives from mainline denomination, dispensationalists, participants in the holiness and growing Pentecostal movements.¹⁹

Grenz maintains (1993:25) that evangelicalism is a specifically twentieth-century phenomenon. “Thus defined, evangelicals are a group of believers who consciously seek to stand between liberalism and fundamentalism.” They are committed both to the orthodox doctrines of the Christian faith and to engage with the world. Liberalism is itself an outcome of the Enlightenment with its sceptical rationalism, humanism and positivism and it is this reality that has framed many of the historical theological debates.

¹⁹ The histories of evangelicalism in Europe or Britain differ in some respects from that in the United States. For a history of the Evangelical Alliance in Britain, which is over 150 years old, see Ian Randall, and David Hilborn. *One Body in Christ*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001.

However, evangelicalism is numerically strongest today in the developing world where the mood of modernism and even post-modernism is irrelevant because the main issues relate to the struggle for survival and not esoteric debates. The growth of the church in Africa has been spectacular, from 9 million in 1900 to 319 million in 1997.²⁰

It is taking a long time for evangelical scholars to write with these trends in mind. Missiologists have been aware of these facts but too often academic historians write for the closed scholarly community of the North.²¹

Time will tell what effect these evangelicals in the South will have on the future of evangelicalism as a world movement. To date there has been virtually no scholarly reflection on this great new reality because most writings on future evangelical scenarios are cast in the old paradigms of the 'North'. However, all theological ideologies reflect the communities and their social conditions that gave them birth.²² It would come as no surprise, then, to see evangelicalism in the South take its own distinctive ethos. There are no state churches in the 'South', thus the debate around established church versus free church is irrelevant. The Reformation and its debates would be unknown among the millions of poor and poorly educated rural believers in Africa as would be the tussle between Scripture and science. The prosperity gospel, despite its superficial references to 'the bible says', is more of a threat to theological orthodoxy because the theological

²⁰ Figures taken from M Noll *Turning Points* 1997, Baker, who in turn quotes Barrett in the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, January 1997.

²¹ Walbert Buhlmann was among the first to write about the changing balance in the world church in his ground-breaking 1973 book *The Coming of the Third Church*. St Paul Publications. A significant, more recent book on the subject is P Jenkins *The Next Christendom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

²² The chapter by M. Sterret 'Black Religion and the Question of Evangelical Identity' in Dayton, D. and R. Johnston, *The Variety of American Evangelicalism* illustrates the same point with respect to Black evangelicals in America.

legitimation of health and wealth finds fertile soil among the poor who wonder if there is life before death rather than if there is life after death. As Archbishop Tutu has said, “African Christianity is more danced out than thought out”. If this is true, then doctrinal niceties will have little appeal and the African church could fall prey to heterodox beliefs and practices.

While Western evangelical faith missions were used by God in the nineteenth century in the great expansion of the church, as is evidenced by the statistics already quoted above, a new trend has dawned.²³ There are today more missionaries from the South than from the North. The DNA of evangelicals as ‘gospel people’ has been transmitted to the new churches of the South.

2.2.8 Modern evangelical groupings

It is no surprise that, as evangelicalism has grown to become a worldwide phenomenon, it has diversified. Several attempts have been made to classify the evangelical ‘tribes’, as Stott playfully calls them (1999:25). Stott quotes G Fracke (1999:25 ff), who published a list of six categories:

- Fundamentalists (polemical and separatist)
- Old evangelicals (emphasising personal salvation and mass evangelism)
- New evangelicals (acknowledging social responsibility and apologetics)
- Justice and peace evangelicals (socio-political activists)

²³ In 1973 a book by J. Wong, P. Larson and E. Pentecost ‘*Missions From the Third World*’ identified about 3000 non-Western missionaries. This caused great excitement at the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation in 1974. Research by L Pate and L Keyes shows that that figure would be in excess of 200 000 today.

- Charismatic evangelicals (stressing the work of the Holy Spirit in tongues speaking, healing and worship)
- Ecumenical evangelicals (concerned for unity and co-operation).

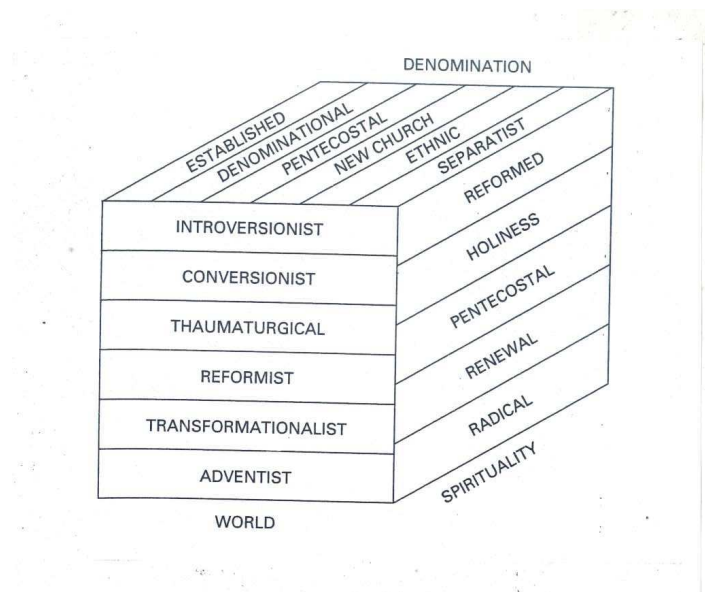
I would imagine that Pentecostals would need to be grouped with the charismatics. Some evangelical groups have long resisted including Pentecostals within the family of evangelicalism. I remember that some of the delegates from Germany walked out of the Lausanne 1 conference in 1974 when a Pentecostal spoke in a plenary session. C. Calver wrote in 1987 “The German Evangelical Alliance still excludes Pentecostals from membership...” (Calver.1987:54). Whether they like it or not, the fact is that Pentecostalism is a great new fact of our time. M. Noll writes (:299) “One of the most momentous developments in the twentieth-century history of Christianity must certainly be the emergence of Pentecostalism as a dynamic force around the world. In 1900 there were, at most, a bare handful.....by the end of the century 500 million could be identified as Pentecostal or charismatic.”

There is a more extensive typology of evangelicalism provided by D. Tidball (1994:20 ff). He uses a diagram of a cube with the three axes being the most important attitudinal dimensions of Church/Denomination, Spirituality, and World.

Attitudes to the Church fall into the following categories of separatist, ethnic, new church, Pentecostal, denominational, established (state church).

Attitudes to and different emphases with respect to spirituality include: reformed, holiness, pentecostal, renewal, and radical.

Different attitudes to the world include: adventist, transformationalist, reformist, thaumaturgical (miracles), conversionist, and introversionist.



This is a more sophisticated form of analysis and classification because it allows for the interplay of more distinguishing factors. As was mentioned earlier on, the usual way of defining evangelicalism has been by historical theology. It also needs to be defined in sociological terms, and this is what is missing in most literature on evangelicalism. Is it a middle class movement? What role does race play in defining its ethos? Now that evangelicalism is a worldwide phenomenon, what impact has that had on evangelical identity? (It is clearly no longer a predominantly North American movement, but scholars still write as if it is.) Most evangelicals in the 'South' are poor while the opposite is true

in the North. How does this reality affect evangelical identities? How does postmodernism, and even premodernism in rural Africa, shape the identity of evangelicalism?

2.3 Distinguishing Between Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism

This is such an important subject that it warrants a special discussion of its own. There have been at least three semantic shifts of meaning of the word ‘fundamentalism’ which need to be carefully distinguished.

The first is the original use of the word that was arose from a set of twelve paper backs entitled *The Fundamentals* that were published in the United States between 1909 and 1915. They sought to protect the essential doctrines (the fundamentals) of the Christian faith from the erosive inroads of modern thought. These were the classic doctrines of the substitutionary atonement and deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, the resurrection, the Second Coming and the authority and inerrancy of the Bible. Originally, the term fundamentalist was an acceptable synonym for evangelical. As late as 1947 Carl Henry did not distinguish between the two terms in his book *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*.

The second meaning grew gradually as the term became associated with ‘certain extremes and extravagances’ (Stott. 1999:20) as the movement reacted against the teaching of evolution, what came to be called ‘the social gospel’ and the rise of higher criticism (historical and literary biblical criticism). “Due to the tactics of certain leaders,

the fundamentalist image eventually became stereotyped as close-minded, belligerent and separatist” (Douglas. 1974:396). It is also true to say that the term came to be associated with conservative political causes in the United States and with conservative cultural values - largely rural and Southern.

The third and most recent semantic shift over the past thirty years has come to include any religious or political cause that is characterized by militaristic methods, bigotry, anti-intellectualism, reactionary dogmatism and intolerance. To most people their definition would be loaded with pejorative content. “Fundamentalist is popularly used as a synonym for bigotry, intellectual immaturity, fanaticism, and sometimes violence” (Partridge.2001: Introduction). This modern usage would include Hindu fundamentalism, Muslim fundamentalism, Christian fundamentalism, Jewish fundamentalism, etc. References can be made to political fundamentalism and even cultural fundamentalism. This is a far cry from the original meaning and intention of the word that sought to preserve the core teachings of the Christian faith!

It is small wonder that evangelicals are at great pains to distinguish themselves from the damning epithet of fundamentalism because of the unpleasant baggage associated with the term today. One of John Stott’s disclaimers in the introduction to his *Evangelical Truth* is “Thirdly, the evangelical faith is *not a synonym for fundamentalism*, for the two have a different history and a different connotation” (1999:19). He distinguishes between the two in a list of ten tendencies with regard to human thought, the nature of the Bible, biblical inspiration, biblical interpretation, the ecumenical

movement, the church, the world, race, the Christian mission and, finally, the Christian hope. I shall use a similar but more compact list set out by the Evangelical Alliance of Great Britain.

FUNDAMENTALISTS	EVANGELICALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are suspicious of scholarship and science. • Tend to be anti-intellectual. • Have a mechanical view of how the Bible was written. • Have a literalistic approach to interpreting the Bible. • Reject involvement with Christians who do not accept their views. • Often allow culture to influence their beliefs. Thus some support racial intolerance, prosperity teaching and right wing views. • Have denied, until recently, that the Christian gospel has social implications. • Insist on certain views concerning the Second Coming of Christ. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage academic study in order to develop a deeper understanding of faith. • Believe it essential to understand the culture and circumstances in which the Bible was written. • See the Bible as a rich collection of history, poetry, prophecy, metaphor and symbol, to be understood accordingly. • Will not negotiate on the essentials of the Christian faith. But believe secondary differences do not prevent co-operation with others. • Seek to allow the Bible to question and challenge culture - including their own. • Believe that Christians have a duty

	<p>to be ‘salt and light’ in society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe there are legitimate differences of interpretation about the details of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth.
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It is evident that the story of evangelicalism has a long history and that many streams have fed into it to form a complex matrix. This alerts us to the fact that there might be many varieties, tribes and groupings within this family. We give the last word in this section to John Stott who is quoted as follows “It is the earnest desire of evangelical Christians to be neither more nor less than biblical Christians... if evangelical theology is biblical theology, it follows that it is not a new-fangled ‘ism’, a modern brand of Christianity, but in an ancient form, indeed in the original one. It is New Testament Christianity” (Calver et al, Undated: 7).

2.4 What Evangelicals Believe

The usual approach to understanding the evangelical identity is to follow an historical theological method. The following authors have each distilled out the essence of what they believe is the common core of evangelical beliefs.

1. D. Bebbington in his seminal work in 1989 *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* explores these convictions in detail and concludes that the movement is distinguished by four major convictions:

- The authority of the Bible
- The centrality of the cross of Christ
- The necessity for personal conversion
- The outworking in Christian activism.

2. Dr J. Packer identified six fundamentals as follows: (taken from J. Stott. 1999:27)

- The supremacy of Holy Scripture
- The majesty of Jesus Christ
- The lordship of the Holy Spirit
- The necessity of conversion
- The priority of evangelism
- The importance of fellowship.

3. Dr A. McGrath, drawing on a number of writers (1993:51), drew up a list of six convictions:

- The supreme authority of Scripture as a source of knowledge of God, and a guide to Christian living
- The majesty of Jesus Christ, both as incarnate Son of God and Lord, and as the saviour of sinful humanity
- The lordship of the Holy Spirit
- The need for personal conversion
- The priority of personal evangelism for both individual Christians and the church as a whole

- The importance of the Christian community for spiritual nourishment, fellowship and growth

4. Dr D. Tidball, who is the president of London School of Theology, is in substantial agreement with the above lists (1994) but goes on to include other elements such as the last things, evangelicals and social action, and evangelicals and spirituality.

5. J. Stackhouse (2002:48ff) is in agreement that evangelicals;

- Prize the classic good news of the gospel
- Believe that the bible is the ‘fundamental and supremely authoritative reference for religious life, once given by God in inspiration...’
- Believe in conversion
- Believe in mission

He goes on to add to these four beliefs, all of which he says are generically Protestant.

“What makes evangelicalism distinctive is its fifth emphasis, namely, its transdenominationalism.” Regardless of denominational affiliation, anyone who holds dear the first four emphases is recognised as kin and on that basis there may be fellowship and joint ventures. “There is an important ecumenical dynamic to the elevating of these four convictions above the fault lines of denominational division” (2002:164).

6. J. Stott in his 1999 *Evangelical Truth*, while agreeing with the above lists, wishes to reshuffle the cards. “Yet it seems to me important, when we are trying to define our essential evangelical identity, that we distinguish between divine and human activity,

between the primary and the secondary, between what belongs to the centre and what lies somewhere between the centre and the circumference.”He therefore limits his list of evangelical priorities to three under a Trinitarian rubric (1999:28). “The revealing initiative of God the Father, the redeeming work of God the Son, and the transforming work of God the Holy spirit.” The other evangelical convictions of conversion, evangelism and fellowship are “not so much an addition to the first three as an elaboration of them. For it is God himself, the Holy Trinity, who causes conversion, promotes evangelism and creates fellowship” (1999:28).

These core beliefs are not some new invention. Rather they are ‘basically a Christian orthodoxy as laid out in the ecumenical creeds’ (McGrath. 1993:53). John Stott writes even more emphatically that “... the evangelical faith *is not a recent invention*, a new brand of Christianity which we are busy inventing. On the contrary, we dare to claim that evangelical Christianity is original, apostolic, New Testament Christianity.” He goes on to make a second point that “...the evangelical faith *is not a deviation from orthodox Christianity*. It is neither an eddy nor a backwater but mainstream Christianity. Evangelical Christians have no difficulty in reciting the Apostles’ Creed or the Nicene Creed *ex animo*, without mental reservations, and without needing to cross their fingers while doing it. Evangelical, in spite of the antipathy it has aroused, is in fact a noble word with a long and honourable pedigree” (Stott. 1999 16-17).

Evangelicalism has a particular ethos which is characterized not purely by a set of doctrines, but having the scriptures as the basis of a devotional way of life both personal and corporate. The devotional use of scriptures is thus important to evangelicals for the

transformation of heart, behaviour and mind. Thus, for example “justification is a conversion experience as well as a doctrine, in much the same way as Jesus Christ is an experienced presence in the life of the believer as well as a historical reality and the central legitimating resource and authority for Christian theology and life” (McGrath 1993:53). This view is shared by S. Grenz when he writes (1993:34), “Evangelicalism, therefore, is characterized by a distinct theology. But the evangelical ethos is more than a theology. At its heart is a shared experience cradled in a shared theology, which serves as the context for our ongoing life as believers.”

There is a surprising omission from the lists of evangelical distinctives mentioned above and that is the commitment of evangelicals to holiness. The holiness movement, stemming from John Wesley, was certainly one of the streams that watered the roots of evangelicalism. Converted believers were to pursue the blessing of holiness as they moved towards ‘entire sanctification’ or, ‘Christian perfection’ by renouncing ‘the world’ and devoting themselves to good works in obedience to God. In time, the Methodist commitment to holiness cooled and the holiness movement emerged to perpetuate the distinctive emphasis from 1850 onwards. It took three forms (Ferguson and Wright. 1988:314 entry under The Holiness Movement): The Wesleyan holiness of the Church of the Nazarene and the Free Methodists, the Keswick holiness of the Keswick Convention in England and the Pentecostal holiness expression in that stream of the church.

The problem with this emphasis on holiness in evangelicalism was that all too often it was reduced to a set of legalistic restrictions such as ‘no movies, no dancing, no drinking,

no card playing', which expressed a subculture at a particular moment in time in a particular place. This culture captivity of evangelicalism remains a problematic area. Inasmuch as it is not transcultural, it lacks the backing of foundational biblical sanctions. Legalistic formulations become dated and laughable later. The list of usual 'don'ts' was all about personal micro ethics and behaviours that could be easily seen, but missed some larger and more serious problems regarding racism, conspicuous consumerism, sexism, and justice issues. Furthermore, the negative formulations of holiness meant that evangelicals were best known by outsiders for what they were against and so eclipsed the positive beliefs and activities of evangelicals. The best of the evangelical tradition should be noted for its commitment to certain beliefs and behaviour rather than for its negative sentiments and divisiveness.

2.5 Critics of Evangelicalism

For the sake of being even-handed in the description of evangelicalism, we need to note that there have been critics who have been very dismissive of the movement, sometimes with good reason.

The chapter headings of *The Gospel Shrinkers*, a book by John King, who was the editor of the influential *Church of England Newspaper* until 1968, are revealing. In the *Gospel Shrinkers* he writes about evangelicals under the headings of the pietist, the philistine, the pettifogger, the paternalist, the platitudinarian, the parochialist and so on. In another book called *The Evangelicals*, he writes "Smug, small-minded, blinkered, superficial, insensitive, authoritarian, bigoted, and illiterate: all these pejoratives have at some time or other been levelled at evangelicals - and not without reason" (1969:112).

The same picture prevails in North America. Stott quotes a Professor James Hunter of the University of Virginia. “Leading academics”, he writes, “apparently describe evangelicals as ‘right wing zealots’, ‘religious nuts’, ‘a misanthropic cult’, ‘fanatics’, ‘demagogues’, ‘anti-intellectual and simplistic’, while our message is considered ‘vicious’, ‘cynical’, ‘narrow’, divisive’, and ‘irrational’.” (Stott, 1999:16).

That is not a pretty picture and one that we could defensively try to dismiss. However, there is some truth in what the critics say. Marsden (1975:123) points out that the dual heritage of evangelicalism and fundamentalism leaves today’s evangelicalism with a variety of unresolved ambiguities as well as some strengths.

Even those within the tradition direct some friendly fire at the perceived weaknesses of evangelicalism²⁴. J. Stackhouse laments the fact that evangelicals display perpetual adolescence: “Might this trend of arrested adolescence continue indefinitely? It seems to be continuing in modern evangelical Christianity” (2002:15). He cites the desire to go after ‘what’s hot’ in music, or a new wave of experience, or the adolescent veneration of evangelical heroes, or the problem solving sermons on ‘How to be...’ to the neglect of doctrine, art and literature. He further cites the way some of his friends have worked for

²⁴ See also A. McGrath’s chapter, ‘The Dark Side of Evangelicalism’ in his *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1993 in which he examines traits of guilt trips and burn out, the personality cult, and dogmatism. M. Noll wrote a powerful critique of the lack of evangelical thought leaders on subjects such as nature, society, politics, and the arts in *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994. R. Sider in his *The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005 exposes the disconnect between the profession of moral standards and of the power of God to transform lives with the sad facts that evangelicals are not doing much better than others in the areas of sex, racism, abuse in marriage and the like. J. Armstrong edits *The Compromised Church*. Wheaton: Crossway, 1998 in which a number of scholars comment on the present evangelical crisis.

evangelical organisations and have been mistreated. The fragmentation of contemporary evangelicalism ‘through the proliferation of congregational, denominational, and parachurch options’ enables one to move on to another option when their needs are not being met. He laments “In all this there is the horrible weightlessness of cheap grace, a perverse detachment from responsibility” (2002:18).

Ron Sider writes disturbingly of the current lack of distinctively different lifestyles from those of the world among evangelicals. “To say there is a crisis of disobedience in the evangelical world today is to dangerously understate the problem. Born-again Christians divorce at about the same rate as everyone else. Self-centred materialism is seducing evangelicals and rapidly destroying our earlier, slightly more generous giving. Only six percent of born again Christians tithe. Christians justify and engage in sexual promiscuity at astonishing rates. Racism and perhaps physical abuse of wives seem to be worse in evangelical circles than elsewhere. This is scandalous behaviour for people who claim to be born again by the Holy Spirit and to enjoy the presence of the Risen Lord in their lives.” (2005:28).

The dualism inherent in evangelicalism resulted in there being no Christian mind, no clear theological framework to use when thinking about politics, the media, or academic disciplines. Back in 1963 H Blamires lamented that “There is no longer a Christian mind”.²⁵ More recently Mark Noll writes somewhat laconically that “The scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind” (1994:3). Noll goes on

²⁵ See Harry Blamires page 3 of *The Christian Mind*. London: SPCK, 1963. A. N. Triton, *Whose World?* Leicester: IVP, 1970, wrote in similar vein.

to write “Finally, there is a theological dimension to the scandal of the evangelical mind. For an entire Christian community to neglect, generation after generation, serious attention to the mind, nature, society, and the arts – all spheres created by God and sustained for his own glory – may be, in fact, sinful.” (1994:23). While Noll wrote about American evangelicalism, his observations resonate with the situation in Africa. Noll posits, not so confidently, that “The hope that we American evangelicals might yet worship God with our minds rests ultimately not on our recent history but on the nature of the religion we profess” (1994:239). Evangelical attachment to Scripture may hold the key. So might the recovery of the doctrine of the incarnation; that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Perhaps it could be the call to worship in which we discover God who is the creator of this world and all that is in it, both human and divine realities. The search for a Biblical world view is not just an academic exercise. Rather “The effort to think like a Christian is rather an effort to take seriously the sovereignty of God over the world he created, the lordship of Christ over the world he died to redeem, and the power of the Holy Spirit over the world he sustains each and every moment. From this perspective the search for a mind that truly thinks like a Christian takes on ultimate significance, because the search for a Christian mind is not, in the end, a search for mind but a search for God” (Noll, M. 1994:253).

Despite the long and glorious heritage of evangelicalism, there is clearly no room for triumphalism. It is a sign of maturity within the movement that there is the freedom to criticise perceived shortcomings. It also is a warning against complacency and sends us on our way in a chastened mood.

2.6 Points of Tension and Debate Today

Given the fact that there have been so many antecedent influences in shaping evangelicalism, it is to be expected that there are issues on which there is debate. These will be mentioned only briefly because each could be a chapter in itself.²⁶

2.6.1. Some debated issues

What follows is a selective list of some of the subjects about which evangelicals disagree. They are mentioned in brief mainly to illustrate the nature of the diversity in evangelicalism rather than as an attempt to speak meaningfully about them.

- a) There are different views of biblical prophecy, dispensationalism and the millennium. This has been such a hotly contested subject in years gone by in America but not in England where the subject has not attracted as much attention.
- b) Creation and Evolution has parties arraigned on different sides of the debate with organisations and publishers championing their respective positions.
- c) Pentecostalism and the Charismatic renewal, its validity and value, its particular emphases regarding tongues, spiritual gifts, and spiritual warfare still stir controversy.
- d) The nature of the authority of Scripture is not a dead issue. Being inspired, is it inerrant or infallible?

²⁶ For further reading see C. Bartholomew, R. Parry and A. West (eds) *The Futures of Evangelicalism*. Leicester: IVP, 2003.; J. Stackhouse (ed) *Evangelical Futures*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000; M. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*..

- e) Related to the point above are the diverse opinions on the subject of hermeneutics. What are appropriate hermeneutical tools to use, especially in relation to the higher critical methods developed originally in Europe? Have evangelicals an accepted set of hermeneutical principles?
- f) What are the limits of cooperation? Should evangelicals withdraw into one pure evangelical church or should evangelicals remain in their ecumenical denominations to influence them from within. This was the subject of the famous debate in 1966 between Dr Martin Lloyd Jones and John Stott and it still divides separatists and free churchmen from ecumenical evangelicals.
- g) An issue of concern in England and Europe is that of independent free churches and the established State Church. This is not important in the United States because there is no State Church, although more and more, efforts are made by politicians to capture the votes of the evangelical bloc.
- h) The role of women in ministry reveals different attitudes and hermeneutic approaches.
- i) The last issue to mention here, though not the last of a long list (think of the different views of baptism, of church government, of pacifism, etc.), is the debate around evangelism and social concern. Integral to this debate are assumptions about the nature of the gospel, whether the Christian faith is for private experience only or is to have a voice in the market place and as public truth. It is this subject that underlies many of the issues that will be addressed later on in this thesis project, and as such, it deserves fuller discussion in a separate paragraph.

Before moving on, let it be noted that part of the strength of evangelicalism as a movement has been its ability to coalesce around those core theological beliefs that are held in common (as outlined above) while taking strain in the tensions created by the divergent issues. Some of those tensions arise because of different theological histories, some because of different social conditions, some because of different denominational memberships, and these all lead to extra-Biblical factors influencing the debates.

2.6.2 Evangelism and social concern

There was a time when it would have been preposterous to have placed evangelism and social concern in opposition to each other. Although John Wesley (died 1791) is noted for his evangelistic ministry, he also attacked slavery, opposed war, was concerned for the plight of prisoners and tried to curb the major social evil of alcoholism among the urban poor. It has been said that Wesley, more than any other, was responsible for the fact that Britain was spared the horrors of a bloody revolution like France's. So too did other revivalists such as Cotton Mather (died 1728). He was criticised by the rising merchant class of Boston for meddling in social reform because of his prophetic voice of criticism of both capital and labour. Charles Finney, another revivalist, had a significant impact on New York and also on young converts who joined the reform movements of the day, in particular the anti-slavery forces. "Revivalism of a century ago was clearly related to the fulfilment of Christian social responsibility" concludes Moberg (1972:28).

The late nineteenth century produced many remarkable evangelicals who worked tirelessly for reforms on behalf of the poor.²⁷ William Wilberforce strove for forty years in parliament in England for the liberation of slaves. This was finally achieved shortly before his death in 1833. Lord Shaftsbury (died 1885) worked for more humane treatment of the mentally ill. He championed the cause of women and children who were exploited in mines and collieries. He worked to stop the use of boys as human chimney sweeps. His social concern included the appalling conditions of slums, and schools for the poor (called Ragged Schools). At the same time he was President of the British and Foreign Bible Society and involved in mission at home and abroad.

George Muller and Thomas Barnardo established orphanages. Concern for the religious and social welfare of young people led to the establishment of the YMCA (1844) and the YWCA (1877) under evangelical leadership. Charles Spurgeon helped to establish employment bureaus, orphanages and other agencies to meet the needs of the poor.

William Booth founded the Salvation Army in 1865 in the east end of London to minister in appalling social conditions of Victorian England. This included exposing white slave traffic, the care of homeless men and women, a missing persons bureau, soup kitchens employment exchanges, and much more that characterised the Salvation Army's social concern. But 'Permeating it all was the basic concern for personal salvation which

²⁷ The best known summary of the impact of evangelicals is Kathleen Heaseman, *Evangelicals in Action: an Appraisal of Their Social Work in the Victorian Era*. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962.

had been the motivation from the beginning.’²⁸ In the States a denomination like the Church of the Nazarene was established with the chief aim of preaching holiness to the poor. They did this by distributing food, providing shelter, and comfort for the dying, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and offering rest homes for unwed mothers. Moberg (1972:30) writes that “First hand knowledge of poverty was amalgamated with Christian compassion to deliver many of our evangelical forbears from the devastating interpretation that sees misfortune solely as a product of personal failure and sin.” Richard Lovelace (1979, 373) quotes Heaseman in a summary statement “By the mid-century it had become an accepted fact of evangelicalism that those who had experienced some spiritual renewal should straightway take part in the various efforts which were being made to help the less fortunate in the community.”

But from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century a number of significant shifts took place that caused there to be a polarization between the practice of evangelism and of social action. Moberg, using a phrase of Timothy Smith, calls it ‘The Great Reversal’ and gives his book that title.²⁹

2.6.3 Reasons for the Great Reversal

A number of reasons have been put forward for the change in the position of conservative evangelicals on social issues from 1910 until the 1930s.

The roots of the reversal might go back to divergent views on slavery which led to divisions within evangelicalism from the 1820s. Some gave passive support to the status

²⁸ See the entry in J. D. Douglas (ed) *Dictionary of the Christian Church* under ‘Salvation Army’.

²⁹David Moberg. *The Great Reversal. Evangelism Versus Social Concern*. London: Scripture Union, 1972.

quo while others championed the freedom of slaves. “The seriousness of the break in evangelical ranks on this issue can hardly be overestimated. The results have included one of the bloodiest wars in history in order to accomplish what English churchmen did with prayer and argument, a persistent failure to deal with racism since the Civil War, and a retreat from all social applications of the gospel except for a few relating to personal morality such as temperance” (R Lovelace.1979: 376).

Another factor was a major shift in eschatology which occurred in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Up to that time evangelicals who held different views on the millennium were able to work comfortably together. “D. L. Moody, who was converted to Darbyite Dispensationalism ...transmitted it into the warp and woof of Fundamentalism...” (R. Lovelace. 1979:377). Moody believed that the Bible nowhere taught that the world would get better and better but that it would, in fact, get worse. His task therefore was to rescue souls from the wreck of the sinking ship that is the world. He, and others like him, were therefore evangelistically active but socially passive. Darby’s premillennial scheme was popularised in the Schofield bible and became the orthodox position of many evangelicals even to the extent of being a litmus test of one’s doctrinal acceptability.

The famous Scopes trial in 1925 over the teaching of evolution in schools led to theological battles with liberals and helped to discredit fundamentalism in the public mind.

The social experiment of the Prohibition in the States ended in failure and reinforced the view that social engineering was a waste of time because redemption was the only answer.

Some writers suggest that the devastation of the First World War led to an antipathy towards social concern, to isolationism and to pessimism in the inevitability of social progress. In the light of the scale of human suffering, attempts at reform were useless. Stott writes (1999:10) “This effect is impossible to quantify of course. So too would be the later effect of rising standards of living among evangelicals in American society.” One’s social position does affect one’s perception of reality. Moberg writes concerning D. L. Moody “In addition to theological reasons for aloofness from direct social action, Moody received much of his financial support from wealthy businessmen and became exposed much more to their viewpoints on such issues as strikes and the Haymarket Riot than he was to those of poor laborers”(1972:33). Moberg then goes on to suggest that Billy Sunday in the twentieth century “... saw the Social Gospel as nothing more nor less than socialism. Sunday added the assumption that the American Way of Life was a goal to be sought by all Christians, but even while attacking the amoral captains of industry and the heavy concentration of wealth in the United States, he strongly supported laissez-faire doctrine of free enterprise.” Stott also agrees that a “...reason for the alienation from social concern was probably the spread of Christianity among middle-class people who tended to dilute it by identifying it with their own culture” (1999:10).

The impact of secular social Darwinism that confidently expected the world to get better in a form of social evolutionary progress moved evangelicals in the opposite direction in which they emphasised the need for spiritual regeneration instead. Liberal Christians such as Walter Rauschenbusch³⁰ who radicalized the teaching of the Kingdom of God. Evangelicals were put on the defensive while they defended the gospel and historic biblical Christianity. In the early twentieth century the full flowering of the 'social gospel' made an impact in liberal seminaries and colleges.

Carl Henry is quoted by Moberg (1972:35) as positing three causes underlying the loss of evangelical social concern. First was the neglect by social gospellers of the good news of salvation for sinners which left the burden of evangelism with evangelicals. Second was the loss of control of denominational resources by evangelicals, which reduced their capacity to respond to needs. Thirdly, and this is related to the first one, the social gospel movement that attempted to bring in the Kingdom of God on earth by economic and political means to the neglect of the supernatural redemptive aspects of the biblical faith led to an opposite reaction by evangelicals. These two positions shaped their view of the role of the church in the world. The liberal view emphasized the prophetic role of the church and evangelical emphasized the priestly/pastoral role. The former tends to be concerned with big societal issues while the latter concerns relate to individuals.

It could be said that with the publication from 1909 of *The Fundamentals*, that this became the rallying point for evangelicals and absorbed their energies. It could also be

³⁰ Rauschenbusch was professor of Church History at Rochester Seminary in New York and wrote his influential work *Christianity in Social Crisis* in 1907.

said that one reason for the polarization at this time was the preoccupation by evangelicals with other legitimate issues and thus, seen in this context, evangelical's lack of social engagement is excusable.

However, while the Great Reversal is therefore explicable for these reasons it is not be excusable because evangelicals were not consistent with their own profession that they accept all of Scripture. Hence J. W. Montgomery is quoted in Moberg (1972:36) "But why don't we follow our own advice? The liberals use the visible scissors and paste of destructive biblical criticism while we employ the invisible scissors of selective hermeneutics: we preach only those texts that do not make us socially uncomfortable." It is for this reason that the following chapter will examine theological models of Biblical holism in order to change the practice of dualism that is based on "...the dichotomic fallacy that the Christian message must be either personal or social, either spiritual or social, and either this-worldly or other-worldly and cannot be both..." (Moberg. 1972:37).

2.6.4 Movement toward holism

Probably the first evangelical leader to champion a holistic gospel was Dr Carl Henry in his book *The Uneasy Conscience of the Evangelical* in 1947. He continued to write on the subject both in the pages of the magazine he founded, *Christianity Today*, and in later books.³¹ *The Wheaton Declaration* in 1966 firmly bracketed evangelism as the verbal witness to Jesus Christ with evangelical social action, but still "...reaffirmed unreservedly

³¹ See also his *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics* (1964), *A Plea for Evangelical Demonstration* (1971) and *Evangelicals in Search of Identity* (1976) .

the primacy of preaching the good news of the gospel to every creature....". While that model in which one element is made primary was subject to later debate, it did reflect the rising social consciousness of evangelicals.

In England the National Evangelical Anglican Conference at Keele University in 1967 committed the movement to involvement in both evangelism and compassionate social service because both belong to the mission of God.

The watershed event was the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation in 1974. This was the most representative gathering of evangelicals ever. Third world leaders had major plenary sessions and thus their perspectives from the margins and the poor underside of life were presented. The ensuing *Lausanne Covenant* states in Paragraph 5 that, "We affirm that God is both the Creator and Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression." And "...we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty...." Here there is no mention of a hierarchy of priorities. This paragraph followed great statements about the authority of the Bible, the uniqueness of Christ and the nature of evangelism. Not all evangelicals were happy with this statement and so in 1982 the World Evangelical Fellowship and the Lausanne movement held a Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility. A report was issued entitled *Evangelism and Social Responsibility: an evangelical commitment*. It was published as the Lausanne Occasional Papers No 21. The eight major papers that were presented at that consultation

were published as *In Word and Deed* in 1985 and reflect the serious theological thinking of evangelical scholars.

Other conferences have followed in the wake of Lausanne. Numerous books have been written on the subject. Many evangelical organizations have been formed to express the compassion of Christ in the midst of a hurting world.³² It now appears that biblical holism is largely accepted in mainstream evangelicalism as being perfectly orthodox. Indeed, in the preparation for the upcoming Lausanne 111 in 2010 in Cape Town, the convenor of the Lausanne Theology Working Group, Dr Chris Wright, recently wrote³³ “The Lausanne Covenant (1974) defined ‘evangelization’ as **‘the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world’**. This has ensured that the explicit theology of mission within the Lausanne movement has been integral and holistic.” Wright goes on to add a caveat that “We also need to make sure that we also use the *whole Bible*. For holistic theology and the practice of mission require a holistic understanding and use of the Bible. The Bible shows us God’s priorities and passions. The Bible as a whole shows us God’s heart:

For the last and the least (socially, culturally and economically) as well as the lost (spiritually)

For those dying of hunger, AIDS and war, as well as those dying in their sins.

For the landless, homeless, family-less and stateless as well as those who are without Christ, without God and without hope in the world.

³² One thinks of World Vision, World Relief, TEAR Fund, The Micah Network and Samaritan’s Purse to name a few.

³³ An article by Chris Wright in Fellowship of Langham Scholars November 2007 Newsletter.

The God who commands us to disciple every all nations *also* commands us to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.”

These developments within evangelicalism are most encouraging but there needs to be some drawing of the threads together in order to have a strong case. I have selected from the available materials some powerful theological models. The next chapter will present four theological models for discussion that are holistic in their formulation. Because evangelicals are ‘bible people’ I believe that the way to address the current dualism is to demonstrate that holism is thoroughly biblical and orthodox. This foundation will enable evangelicals to engage with ‘secular’ issues from the standpoint of a biblical world-and life view.

But these newer, more holistic, positions within evangelicalism have yet to filter through to the curricula of many evangelical seminaries. For this reason the second part of this dissertation will examine the nature of the African realities that form the context in which the seminaries operate and analyse the curricula to see to what extent these realities are addressed.

CHAPTER THREE

THEOLOGICAL MODELS OF BIBLICAL HOLISM

This chapter forms the theological heart of the dissertation. In it, models of biblical holism are presented that have been devised by noted evangelical authors over the past few decades. Their main arguments are presented as fairly as possible followed by some evaluative interaction with their texts. Most of the authors, except for John Stott, have given a graphic representation to their thinking which is powerful in its impact and useful therefore as a teaching tool for an African setting (which is one of the intended outcomes of this thesis project). The models approach the subject using different theological disciplines. One uses systematic theology (Stott), another, the Old Testament (Wright), another the New Testament (Grigg) and one writes from a missiological perspective (Bosch). One cannot, of course, neatly separate the biblical revelation into watertight academic disciplines for they overlap constantly. This is hardly surprising because they all seek to understand the sovereign God's saving activity in the world over millennia. This immensely rich subject can only be mined by using different tools in order uncover the complex layers of truth revealed in scripture.

3.1 John Stott's Categories of Systematic Theology

The first model to be considered is one proposed by John Stott in his book *New Issues Facing Christians Today* (third edition in 1999). I will summarise the arguments in his chapter 1 where he lays out a holistic biblical basis and quote from it where necessary.

The two earlier editions, in 1984 and 1990, together with this one, are testimony to the fact that a real need was being met by his attempt to address the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility. This relationship has been the subject of considerable debate in evangelical circles in the twentieth century. Sometimes misunderstandings have arisen out of a misconception of terms.

The first term to clarify is the definition of the word ‘politics’. Politics denotes the life of the city (*polis*) and the responsibilities of the citizen (*polites*). “It is concerned therefore with the whole of our life in human society. Politics is the art of living together in community. According to its narrow definition however, politics is the science of government. It is concerned with the development and adoption of specific policies with a view to their being enshrined in legislation” (1999:14). In the latter sense, Jesus never entered the political arena. However, the inauguration of the Kingdom of God proclaimed and demonstrated a new kind of social order in which the values of the world were turned upside down.³⁴ “In this way his teaching had ‘political’ implications. It offered an alternative to the *status quo*. His kingship, moreover, was perceived as a threat to Caesar’s, and he was therefore accused of sedition” (1999:14).

The second point of clarification concerns the relationship between the ‘social’ and the ‘political’, now using the term in its narrower sense. The following helpful distinctions are listed:

³⁴ See Donald Kraybill. *The Upside-Down Kingdom*. Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1978 for a study of the radical values of the Kingdom of God.

Social Service	Social Action
Relieving human need	Removing the causes of human need
Philanthropic activity.	Political and economic activity
Seeking to minister to individuals and families	Seeking to transform the structures of society
Works of mercy	The quest for justice

Social action looks beyond individuals to structures that have harmful effects on individuals- perhaps an exploitative economic system, or unjust and discriminatory laws, or the abuse of power by the rich and powerful. “It seems clear therefore, then, that genuine Christian social concern will embrace both social service and social action. It would be very artificial to divorce them. Some cases of need cannot be relieved at all without political action..... So if we truly love our neighbours, and want to serve them, our service may oblige us to take (or solicit) political action on their behalf” (1999:15).

Stott is very aware that Christianity cannot be reduced to, or identified with, a particular political program. Nor should the Church become captive to a political party by becoming that party ‘at prayer’. There is space outside of those structures for Christian social action.

Action may be taken by individuals, groups of Christians such as a local church, or at denominational and interdenominational levels. All individuals, as citizens, have the right

to vote (in a democracy) and to exercise their political wills through the usual democratic processes. Some individuals may feel called by God to serve as politicians within formal political structures in local, regional or national government. Christian groups may be effective in lobbying for, or protesting against, some particular cause. Local churches could take action to meet some need in their community³⁵. National denominations or Councils of Churches could make statements, give guidance and teaching on specific social ills.³⁶

“There are only two possible attitudes which Christians can adopt towards the world. One is escape and the other engagement.” Escape and indifference means washing our hands as Pilate did and hardening our hearts in the face of the cries of the needy. The great escape would be an incredible copout from all that Christ called us to be and do. The other is to turn to the world in the compassion of Christ, to move beyond our comfort zones and to get our hands dirty

Whatever the issue, whatever the level at which action is taken, all need a sound, biblical undergirding theology. This John Stott proceeds to provide.

“I propose to marshal five great doctrines of the Bible, which all of us already believe in theory, but which we tend to cut and trim in order to make them fit our escapist theology. My plea is that we have the courage to hold these doctrines in their biblical

³⁵ See Ron Sider. *Churches That Make a Difference* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002 for a helpful treatment of church based holistic action.

³⁶ As the Council of Churches in Zambia did when they spoke out against President Chiluba’s attempt to subvert the constitution by running for president for a third time. The President backed down. Back in the 1970’s Nairobi Baptist Church, under the leadership of Rev Tom Houston, protested against the outbreak of secretive Mau Mau oath taking in Kenya.

fullness. Any one of them should be sufficient to convince us of our Christian social responsibility: the five together leave us without excuse” (1999:19).

A) A fuller doctrine of God

First, the living *God is the God of nature as well as of religion*, of the secular as well as of the sacred. Nothing is secular in the sense that God is excluded from it. God the creator made the physical universe, sustains it and still pronounces it good (Gen 1:31 and 1 Timothy 4:4). He is of course the God of the covenant as well but “Our God is often too small because he is too religious. We imagine that he is chiefly interested in religion – religious buildings (churches and chapels), religious activities (worship and ritual), and religious books (Bibles and prayer books).” We should be more grateful to God for beauty in the natural world, for music and the arts, for sex, marriage and the family, for work and leisure. All things natural need to become spiritual and all things spiritual need to become natural.

Secondly, the living God is *the God of the nations as well as of his covenant people*. The danger was that the covenant people of Israel tended to reduce God to the status of a tribal deity when they overemphasised their election by God. They also forgot the other nations, or simply despised and rejected them. “But the bible begins with the nations, not Israel; with Adam, not Abraham, with the creation, not the covenant.” God rules over the nations (Daniel 4:32 , Psalm 33:13-15) In choosing Israel, God did not forget the nations, in fact he promised that in blessing Abraham and his posterity he will bless all the families of the earth (Genesis 12:3).

Thirdly, the living God is *the God of justice as well as of justification*. “Of course he is the God of justification, the Saviour of sinners. But he is also concerned that our community life be characterised by justice.” He expects it from his covenant people based particularly on their experience of what God had done for them in liberating them from oppression in Egypt. Moreover, God’s concern for justice extends to the nations as well. This is clearly evident in the first two chapters of the prophecy of Amos when Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Ammon, Edom and Moab are rebuked for a variety of cruel actions and atrocities, after which the prophet pronounces judgement on Judah in terms of covenant violations. Several of the prophetic books contain oracles against the nations – see Nahum’s condemnation of Assyria³⁷.

Stott summarises thus, “Here then is the living God of the Bible. His concerns are all embracing – not only the ‘sacred’ but the ‘secular’, not only religion but nature as well, not only his covenant people but all people, not only justification but justice in every community, not only his gospel but his law. So we must not attempt to narrow down his interests. Moreover, ours should be as broad as his” (1999:22).

B) A fuller doctrine of human beings

The point of departure for Stott relates to our evaluation of the worth of human beings. “The higher our view of the worth, the more we shall want to serve them.” The Christian basis of this is not what they might become in the future aeons of evolution but what they

³⁷ For a fuller treatment of God’s concern for justice see Waldron Scott, *Bring Forth Justice*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980 and Ron Sider. *Cry Justice*. Downers Gove: IVP, 1980.

are already by divine creation.³⁸ Human beings have God-given capacities that distinguish them from the animal creation. It is true that human beings are fallen and the image of God has been defaced, but it has not been destroyed. It is this which accounts for their unique worth and which has always inspired Christian philanthropy. God made us as a body-soul in community. “Therefore if we truly love our neighbours, and because of their worth, desire to serve them, we shall be concerned for their total welfare, the wellbeing of their soul, their body and their community. And our concern will lead to practical programmes of evangelism, relief and development” (1999:23).

C) A fuller doctrine of Christ

There are many portraits of Jesus in scripture. “We need to see him in his paradoxical fullness - his sufferings and glory, his servanthood and lordship, his lowly incarnation and cosmic reign. It is perhaps the Incarnation that we evangelicals have tended to neglect the most, in both its theological significance and its practical implication” (1999:26).

Jesus provides us with the model of mission. He said ‘As the Father has sent me, I am sending you’ (John20:21). If the Christian mission is modelled on Christ’s incarnation it will be holistic because Jesus healed the sick, cast out demons, fed the hungry and taught the ignorant. “Incarnational mission, whether evangelistic or social or both, necessitates a costly identification with people in their actual situations. Jesus of Nazareth was moved with compassion by the sight of needy human beings, whether sick or bereaved, hungry,

³⁸ Stott uses the doctrine of creation only to support the argument for the intrinsic worth of human beings. One could supplement the case with arguments based on the preciousness of human beings on account of Christ’s sacrificial death for humanity and on the basis of pneumatology, that the Holy Spirit is given to any believer regardless of race, nationality, tribe or gender as the apostle Peter discovered to his surprise in Acts 10. 34 and 45

harassed or helpless; should not his people's compassion be aroused by the same sights?"(1999:27).

D) A fuller doctrine of salvation

Stott is concerned that the nature of salvation tends to be trivialised to mean a private mystical experience or a personal passport to heaven without social or moral consequences. "For salvation is a radical transformation in three phases, beginning at our conversion, continuing throughout our earthly life and brought to perfection when Christ comes" (1999:27). Stott has elsewhere written³⁹ of the three tenses of salvation in order to broaden and deepen the understanding of this rich word. We *have been* saved (justification), we *are being* saved (sanctification), and we *will be* saved (glorification) when Christ comes to consummate his work.

He therefore states that "... we must overcome the temptation to separate truths which belong together."

First, *we must not separate salvation from the Kingdom of God*. These are synonyms to describe the same work of God. Accepting this, then salvation takes on a broader aspect.⁴⁰ "For the Kingdom of God is God's dynamic rule, breaking into human history through Jesus, confronting, combating and overcoming evil, spreading the wholeness of personal and communal wellbeing, taking possession of his people in total blessing and total demand" (1999:28). The church is meant to be a model of what the new Kingdom

³⁹ John Stott. *Christian Mission in the Modern World*.. London: Falcon, 1975, pp 103-108

⁴⁰ See also R. Sider and J. Parker. 'How Broad is Salvation in Scripture?' In Bruce. Nicholls (ed) *In Word and Deed: Evangelism and Social Responsibility*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 1985 for a discussion on the breadth of meaning in the term salvation. This book resulted from a conference in 1982 sponsored jointly by the World Evangelical Fellowship and the Lausanne Committee for World evangelism.

community will look like as it comes under the rule of God. Entering the kingdom is by faith in Jesus. It is entering a new age which is the beginning of God's new creation when, eventually, our bodies, our society and our universe will be renewed and sin, pain, disease and death will all be eradicated. "Salvation is a big concept; we have no liberty to reduce it" (1999:28). This important doctrine of the Kingdom of God, which was central to Jesus ministry, is the subject of the next theological model.

Secondly, *we must not separate Jesus the saviour from Jesus the Lord*. Evangelists who teach the possibility of accepting Jesus as saviour while postponing surrender to him as Lord, do a great disservice to the gospel. God has raised Jesus to His right hand to exalt him as Lord. "From that position of executive authority he is able to bestow salvation and the gift of the Spirit. It is precisely because he is Lord that he can save" (1999:28). His Lordship embraces the whole of our lived experience, public and private, church membership and civic duty, evangelistic and social responsibilities. The saying used by preachers pertains, 'If Jesus is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all.'

Thirdly, *we must not separate faith from love*. Evangelicals have always emphasised faith. *Sola fide* was a watchword of the Reformation. Justification is by faith alone, not of works, for this demonstrates God's unmerited favour (grace) and is founded on the atoning death of Christ. "This central truth of the gospel cannot be compromised for anything. But, although justification is by faith alone, this faith cannot remain alone. If it is living and authentic it will inevitably issue in good works, and if it does not, it is spurious" (1999:29). In Jesus' story of the separation of sheep and goats on judgement day

when our attitude to Jesus is the yardstick, the convincing evidence sought is our good works. The apostles say the same thing. James teaches it: “Faith by itself, if it not accompanied by action, is dead...I will show you my faith by what I do.” (2:17-18). Paul writes in similar vein about the necessity of good works in Titus 2:14, Ephesians 2:10 Galatians 5:6, 13, and 1 Corinthians 13:2. So does John: “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has not pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?” (1 John 3:17). Stott has succinctly elucidated the pairing of evangelism and social action when he wrote (1975:29) “Here then are two instructions of Jesus- a great commandment ‘love your neighbour’ and a great commission ‘go and make disciples’.”

E) A fuller doctrine of the Church

Many people seem to have the view that the church is like a club made up of volunteers who happen to have an interest in God. They pay their subscriptions and enjoy the benefits and privileges of membership. In contradistinction, Stott quotes Archbishop William Temple as saying “The church is the only cooperative society that exists for the benefit of non-members.” As the rather trite saying goes ‘We are saved to serve’. In place of the club model of the church, the church has a double identity. “On the one hand, the church is a ‘holy people’, called out of the world to belong to God. But on the other it is a ‘worldly’ people, in the sense of renouncing ‘otherworldliness’ and being sent back into the world to witness and to serve” (1999:30).⁴¹ In John 17 Jesus taught the same truths regarding being ‘in the world but not of it’. In the Sermon on the Mount he uses vivid metaphors of the salt and the light. Light dispels darkness and salt arrests decay. The difference must exist for there to be an effect. If the salt has lost its saltiness, it is

⁴¹ A Christian needs two conversions; first to Christ and then back to the world as Christ’s ambassador.

worthless and will be discarded. So too, there must be the penetration of non-Christian society for salt and light to be effective. “We cannot be totally ‘world affirming’ (as if nothing in it were evil), nor totally ‘world denying’ (as if nothing in it were good); we need a bit of both, and we particularly need to be ‘world challenging’, recognising its potentiality as God’s world and seeking to conform its life increasingly to his lordship” (1999:30).

Thus the double identity and responsibility of the Church is plain. The effectiveness of the Church depends on its combination of ‘holiness’ and ‘worldliness’.

In this work, Stott attempts to broaden our understanding of scriptural doctrines in order to provide a solid basis for social involvement. Such action would be biblically based and clearly not a sidetrack to the gospel. When he lays out his case for a fuller doctrine of God, human beings, Christ, salvation and the Church, he omits the third person of the Trinity. This is surprising because Stott is thoroughly Trinitarian in his beliefs and has expounded his views in his *Evangelical Truth* that was outlined in chapter two above. It is not the place to develop a full response here to this lack but we might consider, as pointers, the role of the Spirit in creation, in giving ‘charismatic’ gifts for the service of others and in the Spirit empowered so-called ‘Nazareth Manifesto’ of Jesus in Luke 4: 18-19. In this passage Jesus reads from the scroll of Isaiah (Isa. 61: 1 and 2) and applies it to himself: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s

favour.’ This messianic passage has a ring of the Old Testament year of Jubilee when social and economic inequalities were to be put right in the community of the people of Israel.

3.2 Viv Grigg’s Model of Holistic Discipleship

Viv Grigg was a missionary in the slums of Metro-Manila, having come from New Zealand where he had worked for the Navigators movement. Faced with abject and pervasive poverty, Grigg had to rework his whole understanding of conversion, discipleship, and missionary methods. Nothing had prepared him for ministry to the garbage pickers on Smokey Mountain. The situation forced him to rethink many of his theological assumptions as he wrestled with the question “Where then can Jesus be found today? To find him we must go to where he is. Did he not say, ‘Where I am, there shall my servant be also?’ Such a search invariably leads us into the heart of poverty. For Jesus always goes to the point of deepest need. Where there is suffering, he will be there binding wounds. His compassion eternally drives him to human need. Where there is injustice, he is there. His justice demands it. He does not dwell on the edge of the issues. He is involved, always doing battle with the fiercest of the forces of evil and the powers of darkness” (1984:31).

His book, *Companion to the Poor*, published in 1984, was the outcome of his reflections and of his changed praxis. Grigg had to rework his model of discipleship in order to “...develop a theology of holistic discipleship, relating it to a biblical theology of poverty, of development and of economics. From the theology, a strategy of ministry

emerged” (1984:65). This process was painful because he had spent “Years of my life teaching a ‘spiritual concept of discipleship...” He continues “It was the realisation that I had been betrayed - that I had betrayed myself and in so doing had betrayed others. We had taught boldly and had been taught thoroughly that discipleship was individualistic and ‘spiritual’; that our responsibility was to preach and to disciple (i.e. to impart truths about prayer, the Bible, the devotional life and the Holy Spirit and to save souls)” (1984:69). But where was the social component to his discipleship he wondered?

To answer this question Grigg went “...back to the scriptures to find a discipleship that brought together all of life- social, economic, political, spiritual - under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, a discipleship that dealt with today’s injustices” (1984: 69).

He came to realise that his Western culture had caused him to read the scriptures dualistically. “But the scriptures are not western; they are Eastern. They see life as a whole; they are holistic” (1984:78). He depicts the traditional Western world view as being: Spiritual issues = religion.

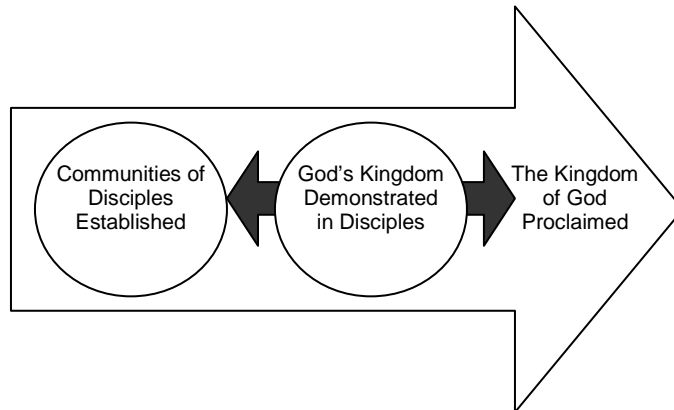
Social-economic-political issues = life.

“Western notions of the gospel and discipleship” he asserts, “were irrelevant in the Third World except to the upper and middle-class, whose problems related primarily to psychological and emotional needs” (1984:80).

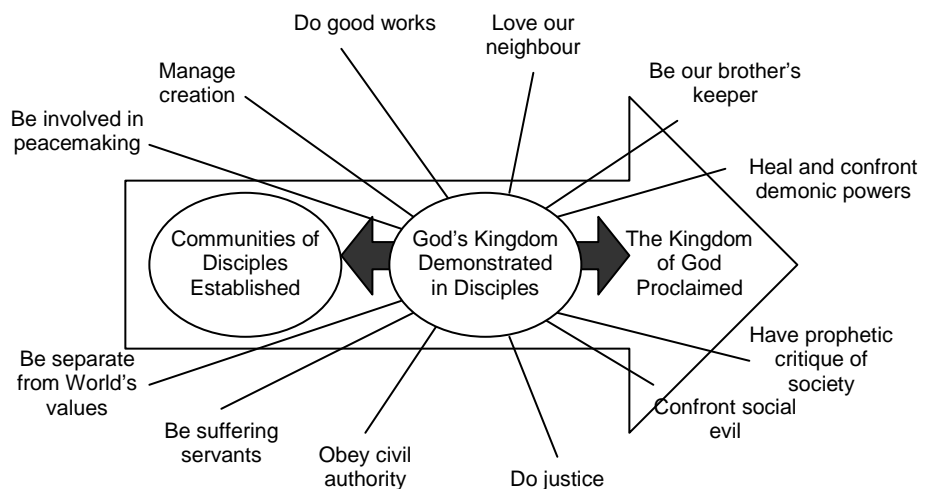
Using his changed view of scripture, he was pondering over the Biblical basis for community development when “Suddenly, I saw the universal biblical theme around

which all of life as well as ministry could be integrated. It was the greatness, the fullness, the unity of the Kingdom of God in the Scriptures and the immutable, unchanging nature of God himself” (1984:82.) At last his theology had a new focal point - it was the Kingdom of God.

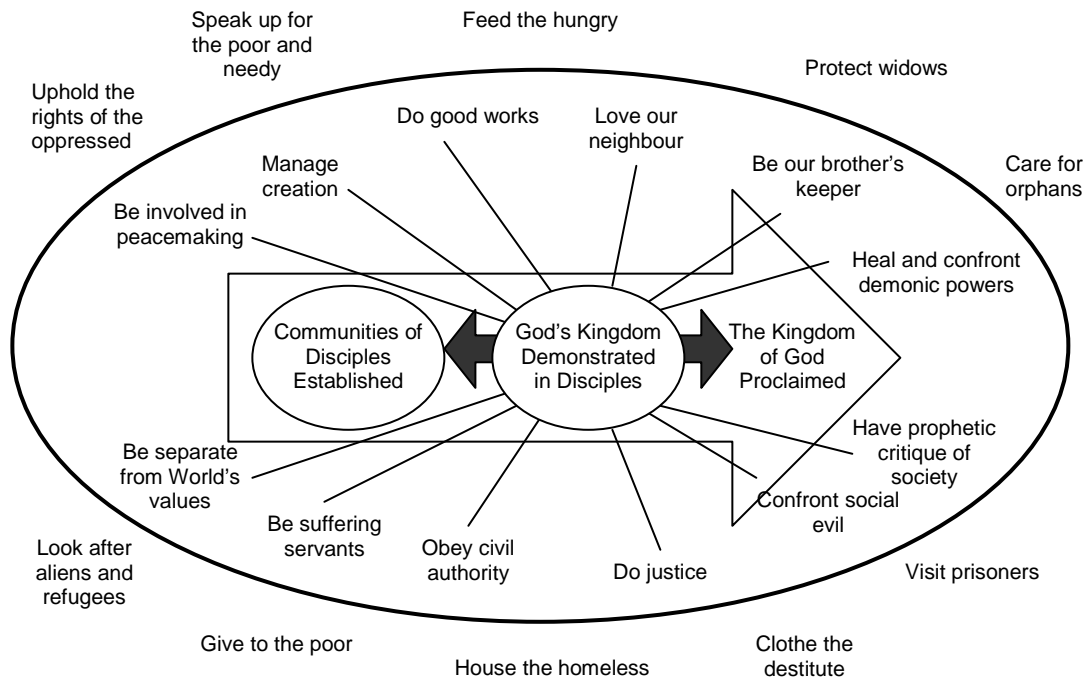
The model below depicts the activities that are the commonly accepted responsibilities of disciple making.



“But the scriptures add the following principles we are to use to influence the world – as salt keeps meat from rotting and light expels darkness” (1984:81).



“To these general principles, we may add specific commands regarding social, economic and political action” (1984:81).

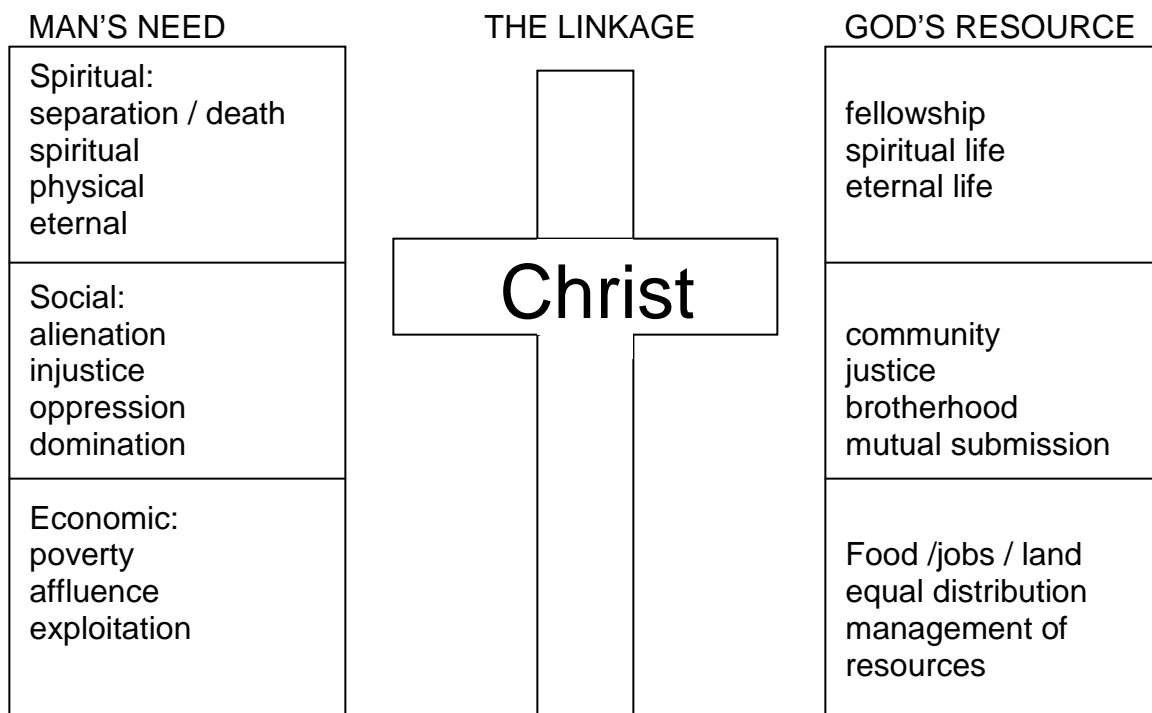


All of the above have biblical warrant and are part of our mission as we await the return of our Lord.

His new understanding of discipleship thus became that; **Obedience** (in the traditional concept of discipleship) + the **socio-political** component of discipleship + the **economic component** of discipleship = **holistic discipleship**. He does also stress the need for discipleship to be not only holistic but also culturally relevant and in so doing he constantly refers to the Incarnation as his model.

This insight changed his ministry. “From this time on my preaching would define repentance economically, spiritually, socially and, where necessary, politically. It transformed my evangelism” (1984:79).

He understood the gospel to look like this:

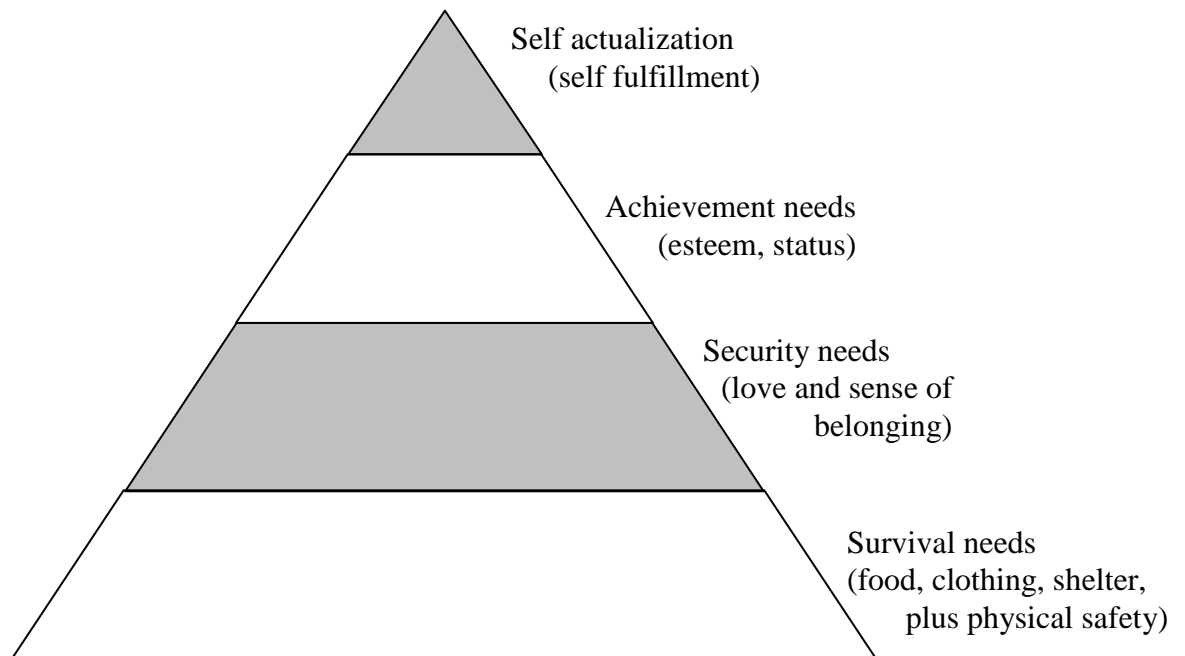


We should note that this model is not the old ‘social gospel’ dressed up and recycled.

Unlike the so-called ‘social gospel’ of the early twentieth century, this model is radically Christocentric. It does not advocate a social programme that leaves out Jesus, nor does it diminish the proclamation of the gospel of repentance, but it does relate the finished work of Christ to every aspect and condition of life.

But one might argue that, if economic prosperity does not ultimately satisfy, why try to uplift the poor? Griggs answer is that poverty prevents people from coming into the fullness of the character of Christ. This is what the discussions in the World Council of Churches in the 1960s called ‘dehumanisation’.

He works with the model of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Human Needs as follows:



Maslow believed that the lower level needs had first to be met before an individual could proceed to a higher level. “When a person’s basic food and clothing and housing needs are unmet, all attention is focussed on providing for these needs” (1984:156).

To ram home the point he writes: (1984:142)

“Prostitutes need Jesus Christ - *and* an alternative income.

Drinking men need Jesus Christ – *and* a job.

Exploited workers need Jesus Christ – *and* assistance in the right ways to relate to their oppressive employers.

Oppressive employers need Jesus Christ – *and* teaching on how to repent of their exploitation and ill-gotten wealth.

City officials need Jesus Christ – *and* models on how to repent from corruption and utilizing their offices for their own ends.

The deserted wife, the pregnant girl, the disillusioned prostitute, the aged and ailing widow, the hungry child, the underpaid mother working to support a fatherless family – all need Jesus Christ *and....*”

Where poverty is caused by sin the gospel of repentance must be preached. Where sin is caused by poverty the root cause must be addressed and the curse of poverty destroyed.

Therefore any ministry must be holistic. “In a Third World country you do not feed a man to convert him. But for him to reach full maturity of character, he must have food. Jesus knew this, so he was constantly meeting survival needs. As well, Jesus ministered to the security needs of his disciples by establishing a team, a social unit, and to their achievement needs by sending them out to minister” (1984:157).

3.2.1 Notes on the kingdom of God

Because Grigg’s model is that of the Kingdom of God, some discussion of this all-important subject is called for. He does not reflect theologically on the debates surrounding the doctrine of the Kingdom of God, but rather simply asserts it and uses it as

the basis of his ministerial praxis. While it is not necessary to unfold a major discussion of the topic we should at least note the following:

- a) The phrase Kingdom of God is used interchangeably in the gospels with the 'kingdom of heaven.'
- b) The actual word used in the Greek, *basileia*, carries with it the notion of the rule of God, the reign of God rather than the realm of God. In the New Testament it has no geo-political boundaries because it involves the idea of people submitting to God anywhere in the world.
- c) The idea of God reigning is prominent in the Old Testament, especially in some Psalms, even though the actual phrase is not used.
- d) The Old Testament messianic promises were concerned with a coming king who would reign. This expectation was fulfilled in the coming of Jesus. "So understood the Kingdom of God is another name for the Messianic age (or the Age to Come) and connotes the whole salvation of God" (Hunter, A. M.. 1957:26).
- e) The inauguration of the Kingdom commenced with the advent of Christ's ministry. The Kingdom had come near because Jesus had come. It is therefore strongly Christocentric and is linked to Jesus role as the messiah in fulfilment of the Old Testament hopes and as saviour through his person and work. 'Truly he is *auto basileia*' (the kingdom in person).⁴²
- f) The Kingdom of God was the central message of Jesus teaching. Many of the parables are about the Kingdom of God. His miracles were signs of the in-breaking presence of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God also involved a new pattern of

⁴² Entry under 'Kingdom of God' in S. Ferguson and D. Wright (eds) *New Dictionary of Theology* 1988:368, IVP, Leicester.

living for the new community for which the Sermon on the Mount provides a compendium of teaching.

- g) Today we understand that the Kingdom has two contradictory, yet complimentary components. It has already come (has been inaugurated), but it is yet to come in its fullness- the 'already and the not yet' of the Kingdom. There are not two distinct kingdoms but one eschatological event arriving in successive stages. We live between these two times in the age of grace when the Church has a missionary mandate to express the mission of God in the world until Jesus comes again. There have been a number of mistakes regarding the Kingdom. It has been either too postponed until the parousia, (pie in the sky when you die) or it has been too identified with some present reality (an over-realized eschatology).
- h) The boundaries of the Church and the Kingdom are not coterminous, but they certainly overlap. It is possible for a person to be in Christ (to use Paul's popular expression) but not yet a member of a local church. It is also possible for a person to be a member of a local church but whose name is not written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The Roman Catholic Church has erred in identifying the Kingdom with their one expression of the Church in history.
- i) The Kingdom of God should not ever be restricted to any political state as happened in the case of state churches, especially in the Holy Roman Empire, but also in other parts of Europe at later dates, when secular authorities could take up arms on behalf of the Church, and visa versa. The Kingdom of God is trans-national and must never resort to the use of raw power for its own ends. The excesses of the Crusades or the

Inquisition are ample warnings of the danger of an uncritical alliance between Church and State.

- j) The Kingdom of God is at war with the kingdom of Satan. This presents itself in conflicts over the supreme allegiances, that is, either Christ is Lord of all or Satan is. There is a clash over motives and values, over the object of our worship, over the 'souls of men', over exorcism from demon possession, over injustice and oppression - in fact the battle is fought out across the whole spectrum of human existence.
- k) At the end of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century there arose in America a strong movement towards social reform, which was necessary, but which neglected to preach the gospel of Jesus as saviour with its challenge to respond in repentance and faith in Him. The Kingdom of God was viewed in exclusively ethical terms as an ideal moral order or some earthly utopia. The overly horizontal presentation of the Kingdom came at the cost of the vertical relationship with God through Christ and was rejected by evangelicals as a gospel of good works. The Kingdom of God is rather more about God's work than human deeds, as his reign becomes manifest in human affairs. Richard Niebuhr's classic statement is quoted (in Bosch 1979:158) with respect to the central convictions of the Social Gospel "A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgement through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross." A heated battle of words characterised that period which resulted in the two streams of the Christian church becoming polarised from each other. The dismissive label of 'the social gospel' has endured for a century and still causes problems today when it is used to dismiss Christians who are not preaching only the 'foursquare' pure gospel.

- l) There is today, however, a much greater consensus that the kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus is an eschatological reality that is both present and future, both horizontal and vertical and must be lived out in the concrete situations of life. Evangelicals have recovered the biblical teaching in consequence of which there has been an outpouring of literature on the subject.⁴³

Grigg's model seems successfully to negotiate its way through the potential deviations and excesses linked to the subject of the Kingdom of God to emerge with a very helpful model to guide us towards a holistic understanding of ministry.

3.3 David Bosch. The Mission of God

This third model is one taken from the late South African missiologist, David Bosch. The nature and scope of the church's mission has been the subject of heated debate for most of the twentieth century and polarised the evangelical world from the World Council of Churches.⁴⁴ In May 1980 Bosch attended the world mission conferences of the World Council of Churches in Melbourne, Australia and the Consultation on World

⁴³ See for example: George Eldon Ladd. *The Presence of the Future*. London: SPCK, 1974. Gerhardus Vos. *The Kingdom of God and the Church*. New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972. Peter Toon. *God's Kingdom for Today*. Illinois: Cornerstone Books, 1980. Howard Snyder. *Models of the Kingdom*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1991. Howard Snyder. *A Kingdom Manifesto*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1985. K. Gnanakan. *Kingdom Concerns*. Bangalore: Theological book Trust, 1989. N. T. Wright. *The Challenge of Jesus*. Ch 2. London: SPCK, 2000. R. T. France. *Divine Government, God's Kingship in the Gospel of Mark*. London: SPCK, 1990. Graeme Goldsworthy. *Gospel and Kingdom*. Exeter: Paternoster, 1980. Donald Kraybill. *The Upside-Down Kingdom*. Ontario: Herald Press, 1978. John Bright. *The Kingdom of God*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1953. Art. Glasser. *Announcing the Kingdom*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003. C. Rene Padilla. *Mission Between the Times, Essays on the Kingdom*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985. Dewi Hughes. *God of the Poor*. OM Publishing, 1998. G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986. Herman Ridderbos. *The Coming of the Kingdom*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1962.

⁴⁴ See Peter Beyerhaus. *Missions: Which Way? Humanisation or Redemption*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971 for a scathing attack on the WCC.

Evangelisation organised by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization in Pattaya, Thailand in June 1980. Bosch presented a table of the viewpoints of mission held in the two ‘camps’.⁴⁵ In these tables, “Melbourne” is shorthand for the ecumenical understanding of mission and “Pattaya” for the evangelical viewpoint.

MELBOURNE	PATTAYA
Shows a preference for the “Jesus language” of the gospels.	Shows a preference for the language of Paul’s epistles.
Emphasis on the present.	Emphasis on the past and the future.
Begins with ‘Man’s’ disorder.	Begins with God’s design.
Stresses unity (at the expense of truth?)	Stresses truth (at the expense of unity?)
Believes that God also reveals Himself through contemporary experiences.	Believes that God reveals Himself only through Christ (and in scripture/the Church).
Emphasises the deed (orthopraxis).	Emphasises the word (orthodoxy).
Social involvement is part and parcel (or all) of the Christian mission.	Social involvement is separate from mission, or as a result of conversion.
Societal ethics of prime importance.	Personal ethics is of prime importance.
Sin is also corporate.	Sin is exclusively individual.
Mission=humanisation=social change	Mission=a call to repentance=a gathering into the church.
The kerygma <i>renders support</i> to the	The kerygma is primary; it <i>gives birth</i> to the

⁴⁵ Dawid Bosch. ‘In Search of Mission: Reflections on “Melbourne” and “Pattaya”’, in *Missionalia*, April 1981. A similar list was published under the heading “Evangelism. An Holistic Approach” in the *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* in September 1981.

koinonia and the diakonia.	koinonia and the diakonia.
Emphasises liberation.	Emphasis on justification and redemption.
Hears the cry of the poor and the oppressed.	Hears the cry of the lost.
Considers man from the perspective of creation	Considers man from the perspective of the fall
Judges the world positively.	Judges the world negatively.
There are no clear boundaries between the Church and the world.	The boundaries between the Church and the world are clearly defined.
Regards the world as the main arena of God's activity.	Regards the Church as the main arena of God's activity.
Underscores the Church's credibility.	Underscores the Church's opportunity.
Is concerned about witnessing where the Church <i>is</i> .	Is concerned about witnessing where the Church <i>is not</i> .
Divides the world into rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed.	Divides the world into 'people groups'.
Reveals a proclivity towards Socialism.	Reveals a proclivity towards Capitalism.
Highlights Jesus human nature.	Highlights Jesus divine nature.
Focuses attention on the universality of Christ.	Focuses attention on the uniqueness of Christ.
Considers man from the perspective of creation	Considers man from the perspective of the fall
Judges the world positively.	Judges the world negatively.

“This juxtaposition of the two approaches is admittedly an oversimplification. Yet there is enough truth in this schema to cause concern and compel both ecumenicals and evangelicals to engage in serious soul searching” (1981a, 6). The striking thing to note is that both positions would claim biblical warrant for themselves. The problem lies in the fact that both positions essentially truncate the whole biblical revelation. It is as if the pair of scissors has only one blade, whereas both blades are necessary for it to function properly. The Great Commandment (*diakonia*) and the Great Commission (*kerygma*) “...resemble the two blades of a pair of scissors which operate in unison, held together by the *koinonia*, the fellowship, which likewise is not a separate ‘part’ of the Church’s task, but rather the ‘cement’ which keeps *kerygma* and *diakonia* together, the ‘axle’ on which the two blades operate” (1980:227).⁴⁶

Bosch began to write about a comprehensive approach to mission when he wrote (1980:227) “The most adequate formulation subsumes the total *missio* of the Church under the biblical concept of *matyria* (witness) which can be subdivided into *kerygma* (proclamation), *koinonia* (fellowship) and *diakonia* (service).” Bosch in fact goes on to add a fourth dimension, that of *leitourgia* (liturgy, worship) because that is the well-spring that feeds the other missional dimensions and it is that which makes the Church distinctive. This is not saying that the dimensions are the same, but it is saying that each dimension is part of the totality of mission.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ The image of a pair of scissors was used by a colleague of Bosch’s in J.J. Kritzinger. *The South African Context for Mission* pg 35. Cape Town: Lux Verbi, 1988.

⁴⁷ This fourfold model of mission was used by Bosch’s colleagues in J.J. Kritzinger, P. G. Meiring, W. A. Saayman *On Being Witnesses*. Pretoria: Orion, 1994..

In the light of the model of the pair of scissors, it is simply a non question to ask which of the two blades is more important or which one comes first, as has been posed in the debate around the relationship between evangelism and social action. In this integral model “Authentic kerygma has an inherent social dimension, genuine diakonia an inherent proclamation dimension” (1980:228). The Apostle Paul addresses the same debate around the primacy of different gifts of the Spirit by asserting that they all come from the one Spirit and that one gift cannot be seen in isolation from the others. (1 Cor 13). Consequently, different Christians play different roles. So too, different situations will demand a different form of Christian witness. The Good Samaritan did not preach to the victim of the robbers but he poured oil on the wounds. “The *context* therefore indicates where our emphasis ought to be and the *circumstances* dictate the way in which our witness has to be communicated” (1980:229).

Bosch makes passing reference in his *Witness to the World* to another helpful image taken from physics. “Word, service and fellowship are not three separate missionary activities but the three colours cast in spectrum by a single prism” (1980:228).

This picture links into the theology of mission as *Missio Dei* that surfaced at the World Council of Churches conference in Willingen in 1952. It was asserted that mission, singular, comes from the heart of God. Mission is not primarily an activity of the Church but an attribute of God. Our God is a missionary God. God the Father is a missionary

God, God the Son is a missionary Son and God the Holy Spirit is a missionary spirit.⁴⁸

The Trinitarian God sends the Church out into the world in mission in obedience to the Fount of mission. “Mission is here defined in Trinitarian, Christological, pneumatological and ecclesiological terms” (Bosch. 1991:391).

The mission of the Church (*missiones ecclesiae*) in all of its pluriform activities is a consequence of the mission of God (*Missio Dei*). “Mission, singular, remains primary; missions in the plural, constitutes a derivative” (1991:391). We cannot of course claim that all that we do is identical to the mission of God because human fallibility easily distorts that mission. Nevertheless the Church has to serve the purposes of God in the world.

The question then arises as to what Gods purposes are. In missiological thinking the answer to this question became more radicalised in the decades of the 1950s and 60s. God, it was said, was concerned for the entire world in respect of the care of creation as well as redemption. This takes place in ordinary human history and not just exclusively within the church. God is working secretly within the world already and the church may be privileged to participate with God in that work. “Those who supported the wider understanding of the concept tended to radicalise the view that the *Missio Dei* was larger than the mission of the church, even to the point of suggesting that it excluded the church’s involvement...” (1991:392). This was particularly true of some of the more radical writings of liberation theologians who despaired at the role the Church played in

⁴⁸ See also John Stott’s chapters in David Howard. *Declare His Glory among the nations*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1977.

Latin America by siding with oppressive military regimes. For them the church was part of the problem and therefore salvation was to come from other sources. In this view salvation history has been completely desacralised and world history sacralised. There was a time when colonialism was seen as a means by which God brought salvation to the world (even by evangelicals).⁴⁹ Later, decolonisation was asserted to be a liberating and salvific act of God. There is obviously a complex relationship between salvation history and secular history and it is very problematic to be able to see God's footprint in history. It is easy to assert and difficult to prove. One's views are coloured by one's presuppositions with respect to a theory of history, theological starting points, and one's place in the sociological strata of society (as a beneficiary or victim of a system).

While it is true that God can, and does, fulfil His mission outside of the Church as He did in using 'Cyrus my servant', it is equally true that the normal instrument of His mission has been the covenant people of God in the Old Testament and of the *ecclesia* in the New Testament (see 1 Peter 2:9) and the Church throughout subsequent history.

While rejecting the radical view of the *Missio Dei*, we are able to affirm with Bosch "On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the *Missio Dei* has helped to articulate the conviction that neither the church nor any human agent can ever be considered the author or bearer of mission. Mission is, primarily and ultimately, the work of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, for the sake of the world, a ministry in which the church is privileged to participate. Mission has its origin in the heart of God. God is a

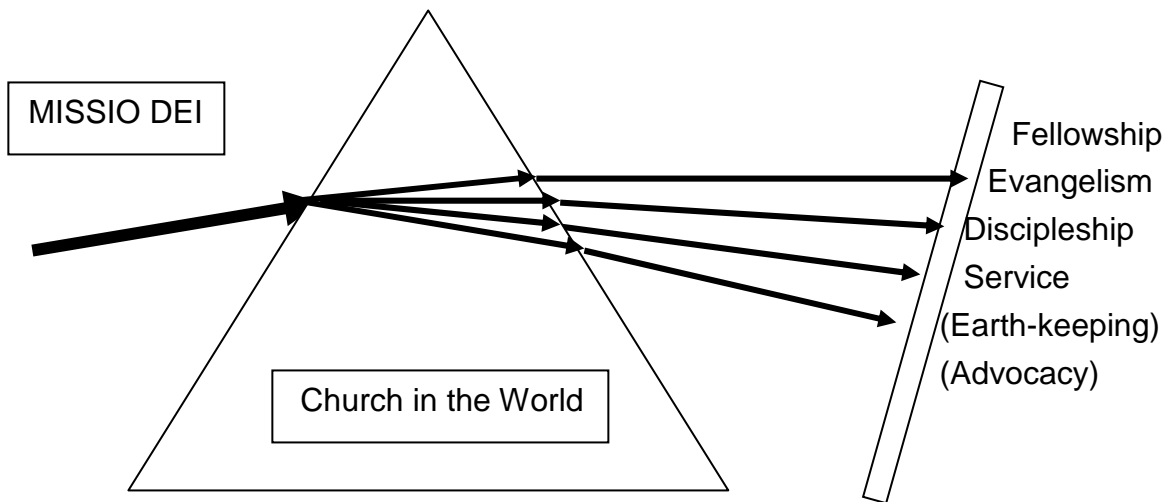
⁴⁹ See Jan H. Boer. *Missions: Heralds of Capitalism or Christ?* Ibadan: Day Star, 1984.

fountain of sending love. This is the deepest source of mission. It is impossible to penetrate deeper still; there is mission because God loves people” (1991:392).

The scriptures give ample evidence of the breadth of Gods concerns. He is concerned for the creation because he made it. He is concerned that different animals be not unequally yoked together in work. He is concerned that the land be allowed to lie fallow. In the story of Joseph he was concerned for food security for the people of Egypt and, indeed, the region. He is concerned for the salvation of humanity because He loves the world. He is concerned for justice for He hates oppression. He is concerned for the widows and the orphans for He is the Father. He desires the devotion and worship of our hearts and lives for He alone is worthy to receive honour and praise. He is concerned for communal life because we were created to be in community- it is not good that we be alone. The Ten Commandments were given to regulate relationships for the sake of right living *under* God, *with* others and *over* creation. These comprehensive concerns together reflect the heart of God. They are evidenced in the Missio Dei and recorded in the bible for us.

In the graphic below of the image of the prism as used by Bosch, the Missio Dei (singular) is a shaft of white light refracted through the prism of the Church in the World and emerges as the spectral colours of the rainbow (violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red) each of which represent different types of ministry.

The Model of the Spectrum would therefore look like this:



No single colour is more important than the others, but each is a component of the original white light. No colour has temporal priority over the others. Each is a dimension of the whole white light. In Bosch's original writings the first four elements of the spectrum were listed. The others in brackets are this authors insertions because I believe that other missional activities could be added as long as they have biblical warrant for them.

This model seems to me to perfectly resolve the debate around the relationship between different activities of the Church in Mission. It holds them together in harmony because they each are a dimension of the whole, the white light of Gods Mission. It overcomes the dualism of our evangelical heritage. It better accords with the teaching of scripture and it eliminates the temporal debate about the priority of either evangelism or social action.

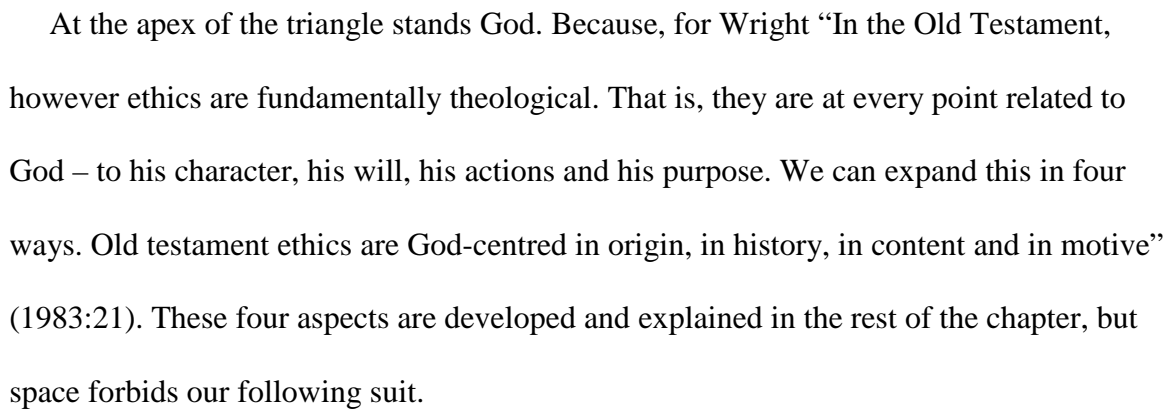
We should draw attention to the fact that the term ‘mission’ is in the singular because it is the single mission of God in all that He does. Missions, plural, are the many human responses over time and in different places through the Church and parachurch agencies to that one mission. By gifting and by calling, one situation may see an evangelistic ministry raised up (which itself could target special groups such as children, students, immigrants, women etc.). In another place it might be a social service ministry like World Relief or World Vision. In another it might be a reforestation project. In another it might be publishing good Christian literature or a discipling ministry or even theological education!⁵⁰

3.4 Chris Wright. A Framework of Old Testament Ethics

Chris Wright’s *Living as the People of God* first appeared in 1983. In it he attempts to provide an overarching theological framework for Old Testament ethics. For him “Theology and ethics are inseparable in the Bible. You cannot explain how and why they lived as they did until you see how and why they believed what they did” (1983:19). His purpose is to make sense of the many laws, exhortations, moral values, worship and prophecies by grounding them all in a ground plan of principles, or model, that “...will provide a comprehensive framework which is both compatible with the shape of the canon of the Old Testament, and with the covenantal basis of Old Testament theology” (1983:20).

⁵⁰ See the following books for a detailed description of the many different dimensions to mission. D. Bosch *Transforming Mission*, Part 3 chapter 12. Orbis 1991 and Norman Thomas (ed) *Readings in World Mission*. New York: Orbis, 1995.

The three points of the first triangle that form the basis of Old Testament ethics are:



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the rest of human history and would involve, as part of that history, creating and moulding of an entire nation” (1983:33). This plan was not for the salvation of a person here and there, but rather he chose one person, Abraham, and “... promises to give him a land and to make his descendants into a nation through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed” (1983:33). Through the collective of the called people of Israel, God would reverse the global effects of sin that resulted from the curse of Babel, confusion, dispersion, and apostasy.

This perspective makes sense of the Old Testament story as it continues through the patriarchs, the twelve tribes, oppression in Egypt, the exodus to the Promised Land, and the covenant at Sinai. Israel was to be a nation in a specific territory and live ‘as holy unto the Lord’. While they were to be a nation in the normal sense of the word, they were to be distinctively different in their object of worship (Yahweh), and in their social institutions, ethics and laws. The point that Wright emphasises is that the ethical thrust is necessarily social.

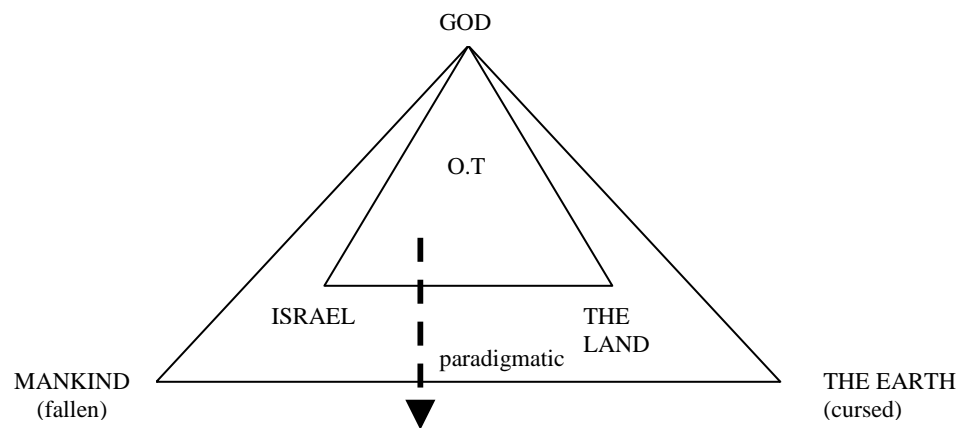
“Nor am I forgetting that many Old Testament laws, including the Ten Commandments, are framed in the second person singular, addressing the individual. But they are addressed to the individual as part of the community, and their purpose is not just individual purity but the moral and spiritual health of the whole community. For God’s purpose, as we have seen, was not just righteous individuals, but a new community who in their social life would embody those qualities of righteousness, peace, justice and love which reflect God’s own character and were his original purpose for mankind” (1983:35).

Wright then teases out the implications of the ‘social angle’ with application to society at large. The challenge for Israel was to live obediently to the covenant demands especially with respect to social justice. (See Amos 9:7, Is 1:13-17, Is 58, Micah 3) “The purpose of their historical experiences and of their religious faith and observance was to nourish a national system of social life that was consistent with God’s own character and in contrast to the ways of the ‘unredeemed’ nations around them” (1983:37). The dominant role of the writing prophets was to denounce the covenant people of God for their deviations from God’s standards.

The third angle (C) in the model represents the land as the economic base of agrarian Israel. God gave the descendants of Abraham a land. The place, promise and function of the land are prominent features of Israel’s history. Land was a divine gift, to be held in trust in dependency on God the giver. Within the arena of the land, God is revealed to be in control of history and nature. God was to be depended on for the produce of the land. This gift of land was proof of the relationship between God and Israel. Hence, when Israel broke its covenantal obligations to God, they were exiled from the land of promise. While people had individual property rights, it was understood against the backdrop of an inheritance, or gift, from God. The later prophets were particularly concerned with economic exploitation. (See Micah 2:1f and Is. 5:8 for two examples). Many of the Old Testament laws are framed around questions of economic justice with respect to the land and the livelihoods derived from it. The model of the year of jubilee, when land that had been alienated from the original owners was to be restored, is a prominent example.

“These were the three primary factors of their theology and ethics: God, Israel and the land, in a triangle of relationships, each of which affected the others” (1983:20).

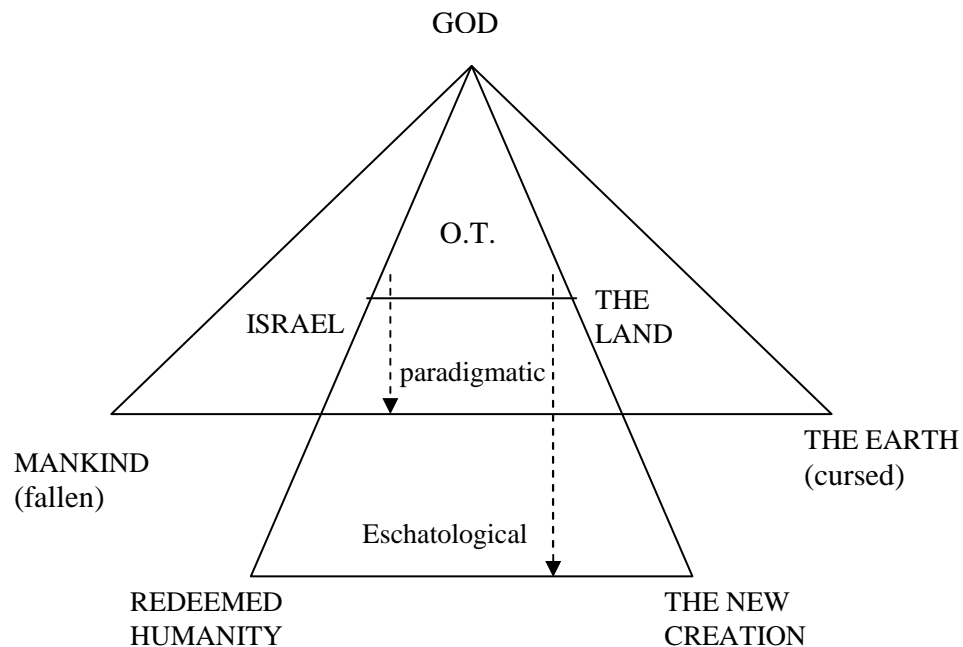
The second of Wrights triangles (page 89) serves as a *paradigmatic* extension of the first triangle. The first triangle depicts God in relation to His people and the Promised Land. Wright then suggests that the first triangle is in fact a paradigm of God’s relationship to the world. “This approach rests on the belief that God’s relation to Israel in their land was a deliberate reflection of his relationship to mankind on the earth, or rather, a redemptive response to the fracturing of his creative purpose in the latter sphere” (1983:88). Thus, in the second triangle, Wright begins with the common apex being GOD but extends the triangle beyond that of the first triangle as follows:



In this paradigm we avoid the possibility of asserting that the Old Testament laws were given to a redeemed society and were therefore inapplicable to secular society today. There is a correspondence between certain themes associated with Israel’s land and similar themes associated with the earth as a whole. These become models for Christian

ethics today. Those who uphold a creator approach (see Stott's call above for a fuller doctrine of God) will believe that the 'Makers instructions' apply also to fallen humanity.

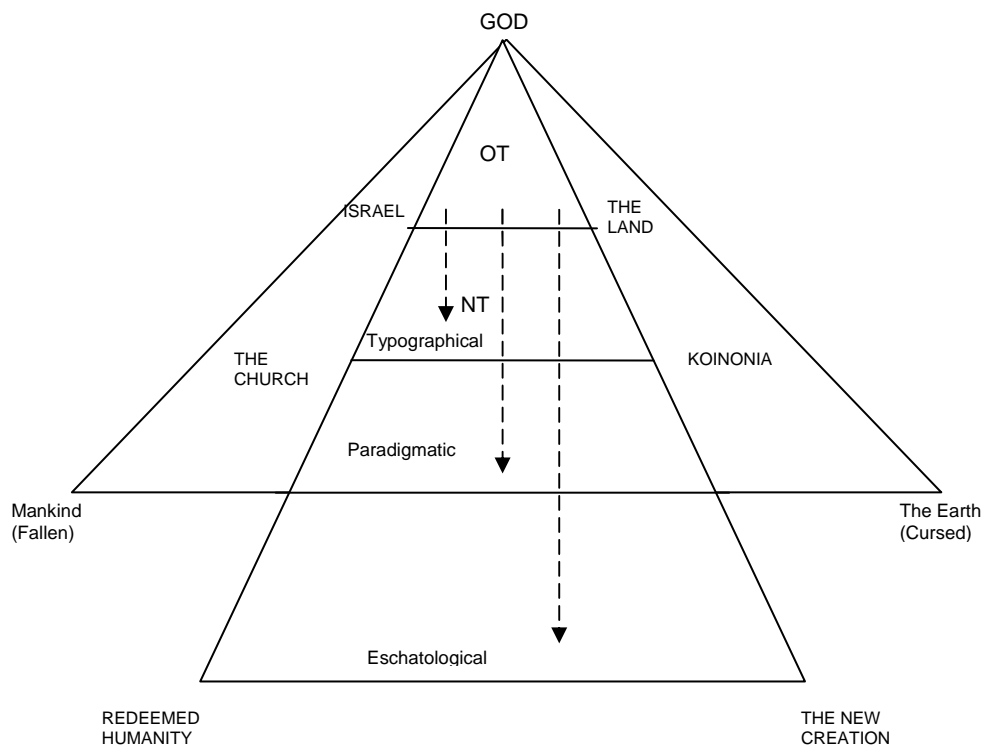
The third of Wright's triangles (page 100) depicts an *eschatological* interpretation which makes the whole model dynamic as it anticipates the redemption of God which supersedes the triangle of fallen creation. The redemptive triangle will eventually break through the triangle of fallen creation.



The justification for this view is that “The Old Testament looks forward not only to the world of nations turning to acknowledge the God of Israel and living at peace under his rule, but also to the world of nature transformed by God's miraculous power. There is a serious ‘earthiness’ about the Old Testament hope. God will not just abandon his creation, but will redeem it. And the land of Israel functioned as a prototype of that redeemed earth” (1983:90).

The question arises as to where the Church fits in? Wright sees the answer in a typological interpretation. By this, Wright means that the great themes of the Old Testament must now be related to the person and work of the Messiah. It is evident from the New Testament that the land has lost any *theological* significance. “The land as a holy *place* has ceased to have relevance, partly because Christianity rapidly spread beyond its borders to the ‘profane’ world, but more importantly because its holiness was transferred to Christ himself. The spiritual presence of Christ sanctifies any place where believers are present” (1983:93). In this sense, the New Testament sees a shift from a holy place to a holy presence. In the Old Covenant the relationship centred on the place of life with God and the life-style before God, but in the New Covenant the Kingdom of God is not a place but the reign of God anywhere in the world. The inclusion of the gentiles in the people of God fulfils the eschatological vision of redemption through the work of the Messiah, Jesus. The typological interpretation of the land now relates to Jesus the Messiah. The old land-kinship tie is loosened and reconstituted to have an all-inclusiveness on the basis of faith in Christ. Those who are ‘in Christ’ are the new Messianic Israel. “Citizenship of the kingdom of God most certainly has a social and economic dimension, which has transcended the land and the kinship structure of Old Testament Israel, but not in such a way as to make that original structure irrelevant” (1983:99). The Church today has the role of being the light to the nations by bearing witness to the Messiah and by living holy lives as the people of God.

A fourth diagram is needed to complete the picture. “Our diagram, then must acquire yet another triangle, indicating the Christian church as the spiritual heir and continuation of Old Testament Israel; Christian fellowship, in its fullest, practical New Testament sense, as fulfilling similar theological and ethical functions to the land of Israel; and both together as the context of a typological interpretation of Old Testament ethics” (1983:100).

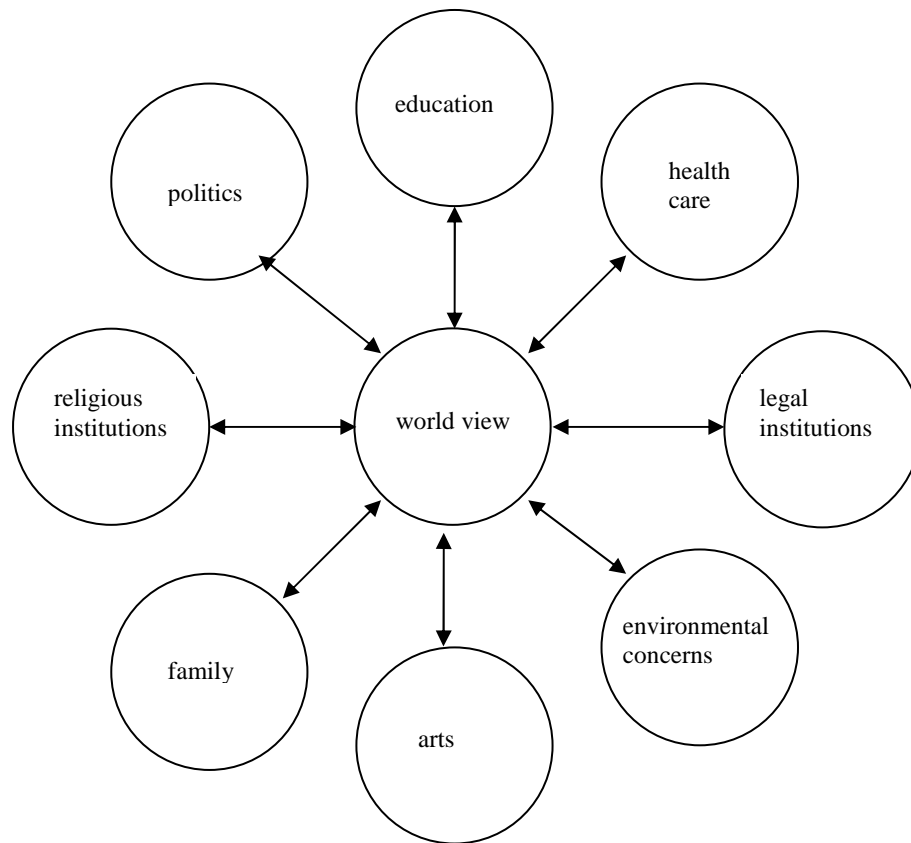


The rest of the book, Part Two, of some 100 pages, proceeds to apply the model to economics, politics, justice, law, culture and the individual. A discussion of this is beyond the scope of this dissertation but I clearly commend it to be read because the applicability of the model to all of life is adequately demonstrated.

3.5 A Christian World View

All of the above models address, in their different ways, the important matter of life and world views. A world view is a set of beliefs, consciously held or not, that enables one to make sense of life. “A world view is never merely a vision *of* life. It is always a vision *for* life as well.....Our world view determines our values. It helps us interpret the world around us. It sorts out what is important and what is not, what is of highest value from what is least” (Walsh and Middleton. 1984:32). On this basis, one is guided as to appropriate behaviour in the world. World views never belong just to an individual. They belong to cultures, groups and societies. Because of world views, every culture has a certain coherence that finds its unity in the dominant vision of life.

Following Walsh and Middleton (1984:33), we may depict the inter-related nature of world views thus:



World views change over time and there are always dissident voices on the margins from people who are early adapters to change. In today's 'global village' there are very few totally isolated groups left that escape the impact of the global media and so the boundaries of world views are not as watertight as they once were.

James Sire has written⁵¹ of world views as 'universes' and shows that culture could exist in parallel universes. This is why it is difficult for people of different visions of life to understand each other. This happens, obviously, to missionaries who move to work in a different religious and cultural group. But the gap occurs also between different generations of people within the same culture on account of the rapidity of change. This is born out in the descriptions of the baby boomer generation through to the generation X

⁵¹ James Sire. *The Universe Next Door*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1976.

which highlight the differences in attitudes and values (often for the sake of targeted marketing strategies).

Religion and a faith commitment are, naturally, important components of a world view. Religions answer many of the basic questions of life. How did the world begin? What is the nature of the universe we live in? Who am I? Who are ‘the others’? Why is there evil in the world? What happens when we die? Is there meaning in life? What is the remedy?

Everyone has a worldview, though it may be explicitly thought through or simply implicitly believed. This roots most people in the dominant prevailing world view in terms of their culture but it also orientates people to life in its multi faceted nature; from child rearing, economic practices, customs and habits, epistemological assumptions and the like. Language both reflects the world view and world views shape language. An example is the language of dualistic evangelicalism which uses phrases like ‘your spiritual life’ and ‘the world’.

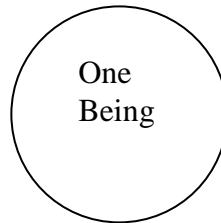
A Holmes⁵² has a helpful way of depicting different world views (1983:9-10) which I include below.

3.5.1 Monism

In this view, everything is ultimately one. All reality is not twofold as in dualism, nor is it the many, but it is one, seen either in physical terms (as in materialism) or in spiritual terms (as in idealism). It erases the distinction between God and creation and leads to

⁵² Arthur Holmes. *Contours of a World View*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.

pantheism. God becomes the all inclusive Absolute Being. This is the dominant world view of eastern religions as shown in the diagram below.



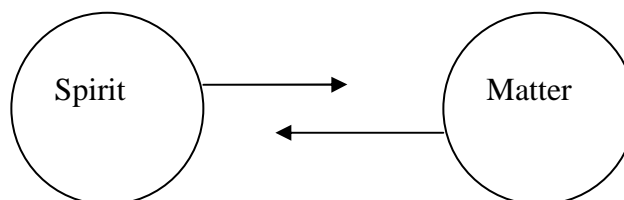
3.5.2 Dualism

Dualism describes any system of belief which contains two opposing principles. In religion it refers to two eternal divine powers or principles in the universe, such as in Zoroastrianism. In Christian thought dualism may be found in a number of forms such as the distinction between mind and body, revelation and reason, good and evil and spirit and matter. The divide between spirit and matter plays out for the Christian in various aspects of belief and life as is depicted below by Boer (1984:133):

Sacred/higher/grace/divine revelation/spiritual/soul/ theology /church.

Secular/lower/nature/ reason /material/ body/ philosophy/world.

Holmes depicts dualism graphically as follows:

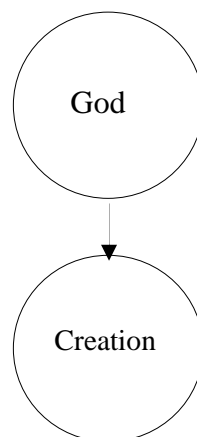


Dualism characterised the Gnostic movements of the early centuries. An ontological dualism posited an opposition between the transcendent God, who was spirit and good, and the demiurge who was the creator of the material world (and evil). Elements of this dualism are familiar to evangelicals as has been shown in the arguments above.

3.5.3 Theism

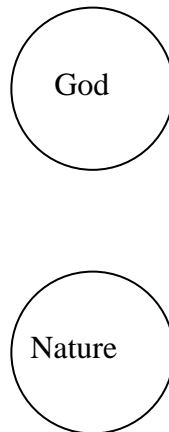
This is the biblical revelation- God created the world but is distinct from it in His being. He is not bound up within it, is not dependent on it but continues to sustain it. The world operates according to natural laws but God can, and does from time to time, intervene in human affairs and in nature (which we call miracles). God, in His sovereignty, is free to act as he will in His creation. Nature is not God, as is believed in Eastern religions, but it carries the stamp of its divine origin and therefore reveals something of the awesome power and creativity of the Creator.

Theism can be depicted like this:



3.5.4 Deism

In this model, the Creator got the creation going but then withdrew entirely from any further involvement in the created order and left it to run according to its inbuilt laws. God is a *deus absconditus*. It is the image of the divine clockmaker who designed and made the clock, wound it up and left it to run on its own. It is the exact opposite of monism where the divine and nature are one and the same essence. Deism negates the possibility of revelation and religious dogma and instead places reason at the centre which is used to discern truth in natural religion. A supernatural basis of salvation is also negated and faith is dethroned.



We have seen how world views guide one's actions, shape one's questions and answers about life, set expectations and shape values. The dualism of Pietism and Revivalism was the main worldview of the Faith Missions movement of the nineteenth

and twentieth centuries in both England and the United States. The extraordinary success of this mission's movement led to the founding of large denominations in the majority world. This view shaped the curriculum content of the theological colleges that were established to serve those new denominations and ministries. It is to this subject that we turn our attention in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER FOUR

AFRICAN REALITIES AND THE THEOLOGICAL CURRICULUM

In this chapter we will discuss the notion of the contextualisation of theological education and then proceed to establish what are considered to be the common features that constitute African realities. The writer works for the Overseas Council International as a consultant/capacity builder in relation to partner seminaries in sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore the curricula of the partner schools of Overseas Council will be interrogated in the light of these realities in order to establish the extent to which the seminaries are providing intentional training to understand and equip people to minister in those contexts. My underlying presupposition is that theology must be contextual. The subject of contextualisation is critically reviewed in relation to the body of literature on the subject. The socio-economic and political context is, of course, not ‘spiritual’, and as such is generally not featured in curricula of evangelical seminaries. If, however, the theological starting point was one of biblical holism (as argued for above), then these realities would come into the picture.

4.1 Contextualisation

4.1.1 Origin and Meaning of the Term

The term ‘contextualisation’ was first coined in 1972 by Shoki Coe and Aharon Sapsezian of the Theological Education Fund of the World Council of Churches in their report *Ministry in Context*. For them this term went beyond the established term of

indigenization that was used in missions literature for the process whereby the gospel was transplanted into the customs and cultures of non-Christian peoples. “Indigenization tends to be used in the sense of responding to the Gospel in terms of traditional culture.

Contextualisation, while not ignoring this, takes into account the process of secularity, technology and the struggle for human justice, which characterises the historical moment in the Third World” (Conn. 1979:90). In other words, indigenization was primarily concerned with worship forms, music, church architecture, appropriate methods of evangelism, and customs and culture. Contextualisation, however, carried with it concerns for politics, justice, economics, liberation, humanisation and the like, rather than concerns about culture.

The term today carries with it different nuanced meanings. There is a generalist understanding of contextualisation. “The ‘generalist’ position argues that all theology, if it not mere speculation, is contextual as long as it arises from the lived experience among ordinary people in their attempt to articulate their understanding of faith. Thus all theology is socially situated and located” (Cochrane, J. 1996:4). This position may be further subdivided into an academic and non-academic sense of contextualisation. The former attempts to systematise the questions and answers arising from a community while the latter are the direct theological reflections of a communities lived struggles. The former are always in danger of being too remote from the community. Contextual theology needs to be done with and not for people, not from the position of power but from within a local community.

The second view of contextualisation implies a particular commitment or a particular kind of analysis as a starting point. 'Suffering', or 'the poor', or 'blackness', or feminist (or African womanist) are all examples of such starting points and *a priori* commitments. Contextualisation has in this view, the strong intention of transforming the conditions of the group concerned. "Commitment, in this sense, is seen as fundamental to a contextual theology.... A bias against a purely internal or psychologised faith is obvious" (Cochrane. 1996:5).

Paul Hiebert provides a helpful overview of the history of contextualisation by dividing it into several periods. (Hiebert.1987:104 ff)

A) The era of noncontextualisation

This ran from 1800 to 1950 when most Protestant missionaries believed in a doctrine of *tabula rasa*, that is, "...there is nothing in the non-Christian culture on which the missionary could build and, therefore, every aspect of the traditional non-Christian culture had to be destroyed before Christianity could be built up"(Hiebert, 1987.104). This period went hand in hand with the rise of colonialism and imperialism. An associated factor was the triumph of science and technology which conquered the world. An optimistic positivist epistemology was based on rationality, laws of nature, objective knowledge, the idea of progress and the coherence of science. Thus Western civilization triumphantly proved its cultural superiority. Belief in cultural evolution, under the influence of biological evolution, assumed that history had a beginning, was directional and progressive. All cultures were seen to be at

different stages of development from 'primitive' to sophisticated ('civilised'). So too, for Christians, the gospel had to triumph. "Given this historical paradigm, non-contextualisation made sense. Why contextualise the gospel in other cultures when they are in the process of dying out?" asks Hiebert.

B) Post colonial period

The very success of colonialism carried within it the seeds of its own demise. As non-Western nationals were educated, many became nationalists and led independence movements. The cost of running the British Empire gave rise in Africa to the doctrine of Indirect Rule. Colonial administrators had to begin to understand the local cultures and rely on the 'natives' to lead. There arose the discipline of anthropology which spoke not of 'culture' but of 'cultures'. Anthropology was not interested in questions of origins but on structural functionalism and phenomenology. Each society had to be understood in its own terms and not in comparison with Western society. New disciplines like linguistics and changes in anthropology "...emphasised the differences between cultures and the ways they perceived reality" (Hiebert. 1987.108). The outcome of this was to acknowledge cultural relativism in which no one culture could be used to judge another.

By the mid twentieth century not only was the belief in Western cultural superiority called into question but even the positivist confidence in the absolutes of science. Sociologists and psychologists analyzed the social construction of reality and its essential subjective nature. Science was seen as a community affair, embedded within certain prevailing world views and cultural assumptions. Positivism was under attack from

subjectivism. Scientific knowledge was no longer simply linear, progressive, objective and cumulative, but a series of subjective and competing paradigms. This shift in intellectual milieu affected the church and missionaries as well and prepared the way for contextualisation.

There were other changes underway in the mid twentieth century. The late 1960s and 1970s were times of radicalism in society and in the World Council of Churches. The WCC conference in Geneva in 1966 on Church and Society questioned the validity of the distinction between salvation history and secular history. God's salvific purposes could as easily be seen in those political movements that fought for justice and the improvement of social conditions. The Church was not necessarily the central means by which God worked in the world. In 1968 at the Uppsala Assembly, the principle of humanisation as a goal of salvation was accepted. This appeared to evangelicals to circumvent the necessity of regeneration. The WCC accepted a Program to Combat Racism in 1968 that gave support to liberation movements seeking to free their people from oppression.⁵³

Contextualisation arose in this soil and became a way of doing political theology, or even 'secular theology'. Contextualisation was thus part of a wider theological debate thirty to forty years ago. Both Liberation Theology and Black Theology were illustrations of the theological method of contextualisation. Gustavo Gutierrez wrote his *Theology of Liberation* in 1971 and Miguez Bonino wrote his *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Context* in 1975. They used 'see, judge, act' as their method of doing theology. The point of departure was the concrete historical reality. See it for what it is, understand it, see its

⁵³ See Neville Richardson. *The World Council Of Churches and Race Relations: 1960-1969*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1977.

impact on the lives of the poor by first making a commitment to the poor. Then judge it in the light of the Biblical text, especially foregrounding the fact that God has a preferential option for the poor. But merely understanding the world was not sufficient. The point was to change the world therefore informed action must follow. For them, orthodox belief had to be completed by orthopraxis in order to overcome the 'epistemological split'. This was a new way of doing theology- theology as action. There was an emphasis on the hermeneutic of history in place of the hermeneutic of Scripture. The method is dynamic because the social reality with which it engages changes constantly. A particular method is the hall mark rather than a static creedal formulation.

It is small wonder that evangelicals were cautious when handling this term. "The very fact that the new approach was initiated in an office related to the World Council of Churches prejudiced its acceptance by a large block of non-conciliar churches. The heavy emphasis on justice and social development left little to be said, it seemed, for conversion or evangelism" (Gilliland, D. 1989:2). Conservative Christians in the United States were wrestling with the debates around the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights movement and were consequently wary of a theology based on social issues.

But the decade of the 1970s saw significant changes in evangelicalism as social subjects were debated, especially in missiological studies. A small beginning is to be found in the *Lausanne Covenant* of 1974 in the fifth paragraph on Christian Social Responsibility which stated inter alia "The message of salvation implies also a message of judgement on every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should

not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist.”⁵⁴ Gilliland maintains that “...the contextualisation debate made serious new thinking possible....” Bruce Nicholls was able to write in 1979⁵⁵ “The concerns of the advocates of contextualisation are valid. As well as addressing the gospel to the traditional cultural values, we must take into account contemporary social, economic and political issues of class struggle, riches and poverty, bribery and corruption, power politics, privileges and oppression – all factors that constitute society and the relationships between one community and another” (1979:21).

Biblically based contextualisation carries with it these convictions that are fundamentally missiological: (following Gilliland. 1989:3)

- Contextualisation is incarnational. The Word becomes flesh and lives among us.
- It clarifies for every people group what it means to confess ‘Jesus is Lord’.
- It opens the way to communicate the gospel in ways that allow the hearer to understand and accept.
- It shows what obedience to the gospel requires in a sinful society.

The positive side of the debate suggests that contextualisation properly understood will:

- Enable the gospel to avoid being dressed in Western clothes.
- Give due weight to our understanding of God’s self-revelation. “The Incarnation is the ultimate paradigm of the translation of the Text into context. Jesus Christ

⁵⁴ The full text of the Lausanne Covenant is to be found in Douglas. J .D (ed) *Let The Earth Hear His Voice*. Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975.

⁵⁵ His monograph, *Contextualisation: A Theology of Gospel and Culture* was, significantly, sponsored by the World Evangelical Fellowship Theological Commission.

the Word of God incarnate as a Jew identified with a particular culture at a limited moment in history though transcending it. In His life and teaching he is the supreme model of contextualisation” (Nicholls. 1987, 101).⁵⁶ In this regard then, contextualisation is not just ‘...concerned with the communication of the gospel but with the very nature of the gospel itself’ (Kinsler 1978:25).

- Cultural differences will be taken seriously and ethnocentrism and monoculturalism avoided.
- Give the right to every church to develop its own theology. Henry Venn’s Three Self Principles for healthy indigenous churches being Self Governing, Self Propagating and Self Supporting needs a fourth one, Self Theologising, in order to be fully independent.
- Make the interpreter aware of his own cultural presuppositions.
- Demonstrate the value of doing theology across cultures in order to minimise blinkered monoculturalism.
- Mean a true commitment to the Church as the people of God because the Church in every local situation is ‘the hermeneutic of the gospel’. In this sense it is concerned with the very mission of the Church.
- Require a commitment to radical discipleship.

Concerns that have been raised include:

- Local theologies need also to hold on to the universals of the historical church over the centuries and in different places, such as the historic creeds, in order to

⁵⁶ The same point is made by Dean Gilliland in his chapter “Contextual Theology as Incarnational Theology” in Gilliland. D. (ed) *The Word Among Us*. Dallas: Word, 1989.

maintain the unity of the world wide body of Christ. Local contextual theology needs to be set against the backdrop of changeless universals. “On the one hand the Bible is essentially the same for all people of all ages.... On the other hand, the gospel is ever new as it speaks to new situations in the church and in the world” (Kinsler. 1978:27).

- There is the constant danger of syncretism and the compromise of the gospel in favour of an uncritical acceptance of local historical situations. The process of contextualisation “...incurs the risk of distorting, weakening, or compromising the gospel itself” (Kinsler. 1978:26). The Church continually faces the twin dangers of withdrawal from the world and of being subverted by the world.
- The Bible reveals truth about God and His world that transcend historical realities. The hermeneutics of Scripture must not be replaced by the hermeneutics of history only and so become a secularised political theology. But equally, the Text must engage prophetically and faithfully with the context and lead to transformation.

4.1.2 Contextualisation and Evangelical Theological Education

Evidence that contextualisation has now been broadly accepted in evangelical circles is found in the *Manifesto on the Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education* that was adopted by the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE) in 1983 and published in *The Evangelical Review of Theology* in April 1984. ICETE wanted the *Manifesto* to “...define those aspects of the renewal agenda for evangelical

theological education which appear to have gained broad agreement, but which nevertheless have not been attained in large measure in practice” (*Manifesto*, 2002 edition).

The *Manifesto* contains twelve paragraphs in which each affirms an important aspect of renewal which in turn calls for commitment and action (See Appendix A). The very first paragraph, significantly, is on Contextualisation. Because this is foundational to this thesis it is worth quoting it fully.

“Contextualisation.

Our programmes of theological education must be designed with the deliberate reference to the contexts in which they serve. We are at fault that our curricula so often appear either to have been imported whole from abroad, or to have been handed down unaltered from the past. The selection of courses for the curriculum, and the content of every course in the curriculum, must be specifically suited to the context of service. To become familiar with the context in which the biblical message is to be lived and preached is no less vital to a well-rounded programme than to become familiar with the content of that biblical message. Indeed, not only what is taught, but also in structure and operation our theological programmes must demonstrate that they exist in and for their specific context, in governance and administration, in staffing and finance, in teaching styles and class assignments, in library resources and student services. This we must accomplish, by God’s grace” (*Manifesto*. Paragraph 1).

What impact this statement has had on theological education is unknown. But we do know that fifteen years later The Nairobi Consultation on Revisioning Theological Education in the 21st Century was held in January 1998. The Consultation of evangelical theological educators in Africa issued the *Nairobi Manifesto* on 16th January 1998. (See Appendix B). The last sentence of its preamble acknowledges continuity with the ICETE Manifesto of 1983 by writing “In the light of these commitments and in the spirit of the 1983 ICAA Manifesto we do solemnly resolve by God’s grace to be agents of renewal in our schools and training programmes in four strategic areas.” The four areas are 1. Relevance to the African Context. 2. Servant moulding. 3. Integrated programmes, and 4. Churchward orientation.

While all four subjects are important in their own right, for the purpose of this discussion we shall limit ourselves to the first one.

Once again the subject of contextualisation heads the list. Once again I shall quote the relevant paragraph in full.

The Nairobi Manifesto

"1. *Relevance to the African Context.* We affirm our commitment to be sensitive to African realities in curricula and programmes. We agree with the ICAA Manifesto that “we are at fault that our curricula so often appear either to have been imported from abroad or to have been handed down unaltered from the past.” The particular issues that

need to be addressed include poverty, AIDS, modernity, ethnicity, urbanisation, and justice. The kind of relevant theological education we envision will:

- Train men and women to facilitate change in society.
- Contextualise every course in the curriculum.

God enabling us, the particular strategies we will use to address these issues include:

- Engaging in further study of Scriptural teaching on issues facing the African church.
- Empowering teachers to contextualise both course content and methods of teaching.
- Increasing the numbers of African faculty.
- Involving students in appropriate service in church and community as part of their training.
- Exchanging faculty, ideas and resources regularly to stimulate change in the issues facing us.”

With contextualisation now well accepted by evangelicals in theory and with the two manifestos sounding the call for relevant contextual theological education, we turn our attention to an understanding of the realities that constitute the African context. Some form of social analysis is foundational to understanding the context. Theological education is always embedded within real geography and real history. We cannot escape that fact for it affects everyone who works in a college and it affects all the people amongst whom graduates will minister.

4.2 African Realities

The task at this point was to draw up a list of commonly accepted problems that dominate the African continent. There are many points of view, each coming from a particular region, or personal perspective based on personal experience, or the nature of the organisation, be it a secular government or Church body. A number of sources were consulted from which major issues were extracted and then compared in order to distil out a common core.⁵⁷

4.2.1 The ISAR list

The first list was that of the Institute for the Study of African Realities (ISAR). This Institute forms part of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology. Visitors are welcome to stay for periods of time in order to conduct research into an issue of relevance to Africa and the church. The ISAR brochure⁵⁸ states “What are the issues facing modern Africa which the church must address? A short list would include:

- AIDS
- Health and Disease
- Economy and Poverty
- Urbanisation and Modernity
- Violence in the home
- War
- Trauma

⁵⁷ For a striking visual representation of relevant subjects see Worldmapper on <http://www.worldmapper.org> The shape of a continent shrinks or swells according to the rate of the subject being measured. Africa thus is bloated in the map on HIV Prevalence but is skinny on the map depicting wealth.

⁵⁸ Taken from an undated NEGST pamphlet promoting the Institute for the Study of African Realities

- Justice/Injustice
- Poor Church and state governance
- Education.”

4.2.2 The SACLA list

The second list was taken from the second South African Leadership Assembly (SACLA 2).⁵⁹ This large gathering of leaders and laity of most denominations in the country gathered together in 2004 to confront some of the pressing issues facing the post apartheid South Africa. (The first democratic election was held in 1994.) Seven ‘giants’⁶⁰ were identified that required urgent attention. They were:

- AIDS
- Crime
- Violence
- Poverty and Unemployment
- Family Crisis
- Racism
- Sexism

⁵⁹ SACLA 1 was convened in Pretoria in 1979 to wrestle with a Christian response to apartheid which was the pressing issue of the day.

⁶⁰ The metaphor of ‘giants’ was taken from the story in 1 Samuel 17 in which David confronts his giant, Goliath, and with God’s help prevails over him.

4.2.3 The Africa Commission Report

The third source was the *Africa Commission Report* that was released in March 2005⁶¹. The commission was chaired by the then British Prime Minister, Tony Blair. The Commission wrestled with the question as to why Africa was the only continent to become poorer over the past 30 years. In contrast, Asia has surged ahead economically despite having been poorer than Africa in 1960. The commission identified a set of key, interlocking problems that required urgent attention:

- Good Governance
- Peace and Security
- Investing in People and education
 - Water Supply and Sanitation
 - Health and preventable Diseases
 - HIV/AIDS
- Poverty Reduction.

4.2.4 The U.N. Millennium Development Goals

The fourth set was taken from the United Nations “Millennium Development Goals” to be achieved by 2015. The Millennium Development goals were adopted and signed by 189 countries in 2000. These were global goals, but have acute relevance to Africa which scores badly in relation to most of the goals.

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education

⁶¹ See also www.commissionforafrica.org

- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development.

4.2.5 The Common Elements

In analysing the four lists I extracted the following table:

Common to all four were:

- poverty and unemployment
- HIV/AIDS

Common to three were:

- education concerns
- governance issues
- war, peace, security, violence, trauma

Common to two were:

- women, gender, sexism
- broader health matters like child and maternal health, water and sanitation

Listed only once were:

- family concerns (SACLA)
- racism (SACLA)
- the environment (UN)

It is salutary to note that on the United Nations Gender Equality Index that rated 136 countries, African countries filled the bottom 10 places. Of the 42 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries as defined by the World Bank and IMF initiative, 32 are in sub-Saharan Africa. The United Nations Human Development Index reveals that all the 21 countries classified at the bottom of the list under Low Human Development are indeed African. These bland statements disguise the fact of untold suffering and represent a major challenge to the church to obey the great commandment.

4.2.6 Causal Theories

There are many theories as to the causes of Africa's parlous situation. Books and journal articles abound and we cannot do justice to them all except to make passing reference to some of the theories. We need however to be alert to the fact that simple monocausal theories cannot do justice to the complexity of the problems of so vast and diverse a continent.

4.2.6.1 There are theories based on the geography of Africa

Africa has few navigable rivers which has historically prevented easy access into the hinterland. Africa lacks an indented coastline like Europe and this has blocked out the

moderating influence of the sea. Africa straddles the equator making it largely tropical with the resultant high rainfall, hot sun and easily leeched soils. The people of Africa have suffered the debilitating effects of tropical diseases such as malaria, parasites and water born diseases.⁶² The point is made, by way of contrast, that most of the developed nations arose in the healthier temperate mid latitudes. Of the 42 countries classified by the World Bank as Heavily Indebted Poor Countries, 39 of them are within the tropics or in desert areas.

4.2.6.2 There are theories based on the social history of the continent

Two observations stand out above the rest. The first is that Africa suffered the ravages of systematic slavery for hundreds of years. Early Arab trans-Saharan slave trading was replaced by the much larger European Atlantic slave trade (Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French and English) in which an estimated eleven million Africans were captured and shipped to the new world of Latin America, (particularly Brazil), North America and the Caribbean over a period of four hundred years. The constant loss of healthy adults was hugely disruptive to African societies. This massive trade would not have been possible without the cooperation and active agency of African chiefs who captured and transported slaves to the coast to be sold to waiting ships. No continent could lose so many people without harmful psychological, political, economic and social effects.

⁶² Another critically important health issue is that of AIDS. That has however nothing much to do directly with the issue of geographical location. But let it be said here that 70% of the worlds AIDS sufferers are on the African continent AIDS has claimed approximately 20 million deaths to date. Life expectancy in some countries has halved. This pandemic has wiped out half the developmental gains of the past 50 years.

The second major event was European colonisation. At first it was haphazard but that changed into full blown imperialism with the ‘scramble for Africa’ in the late nineteenth century.⁶³ The ‘scramble’ was regularised by the Berlin Conference in 1884-1885 in an effort to avoid war over the territories. European powers simply assumed their right to annex territory in Africa and to apportion it among themselves. The worst-case example was the Belgian Congo that was actually the personal property of King Leopold of Belgium. Lines were drawn on a map without reference to the people on the ground. Thus tribal and language groups were arbitrarily separated. Boundaries have continued to be a problem in post colonial times. Existing African kingdoms were overthrown or destabilised. Decolonisation began with the independence of Ghana 50 years ago. But the colonists left deep scars - as well as some helpful infrastructure. One of the scars has been what Steve Biko, a South African black consciousness leader, called the ‘colonisation of the mind’. This sense of inferiority prevents people from fulfilling their true potential. An interesting view is that the colonial regimes ruled without a democratic mandate from the people. They were answerable to a far off power. Only a few top officials were the beneficiaries of that system. Independent Africa simply inherited and perpetuated a form of government that had been modelled to them – unanswerable to the people and for the benefit of the few.

Under the heading of social theories, we might add the view that Africa has a very high ethnic diversity rating as measured against distinct language and ethnic groups. Europe had similar diversity once but a series of ethnic cleansings reduced it centuries

⁶³ See Thomas Pakenham’s magisterial treatment of the subject in his *The Scramble for Africa 1876-1912*. London: Abacus 1991.

ago. The diversity creates the potential for fracture zones within African countries. These had been exploited by colonial regimes in their divide and rule practices, and independent governments have also exploited the divisions for their own ends. The resultant civil wars have been catastrophic. Africa has had more wars over the past 50 years than any other continent with the accompanying highest numbers of refugees and displaced people.⁶⁴

4.2.6.3 The third cluster of possible causes is economic

Africa is an exporter of primary products and commodities that have a low value per ton. What is needed is a strong manufacturing sector to beneficiate the products in order to earn higher revenues. Diamonds should be cut in Africa and not simply sent to Antwerp. Coffee should be processed in Africa where it is produced. Asia, by way of contrast, in 1991 had 80% of its exports from the manufacturing sector while Africa's was 11%. World commodity prices are subject to large price fluctuations that affect the producer country's revenue and lead to boom (which is the case currently) or bust economies. Africa share of world trade by value is a mere 2%.

Africa is the victim of unfair world trade patterns, meagre quotas and stiff tariffs, and low prices. Certain products, such as sugar, cannot compete on the open market nor be exported to the United States and Europe because those countries heavily subsidise their farmers so that African products cannot compete. What Africa needs is fair trade, not more aid. That would break the beggar mentality that so degrades the dignity of people on the continent. The ramshackle infrastructure in Africa makes doing business very difficult

⁶⁴ In 2001 there were an estimated 13.5 million displaced people. Gregg Mills *Poverty to Prosperity. Globalisation, Good Governance and African Recovery*. Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2002.

and much more costly and equates to low returns and high costs. Bad roads, long delays at ports, bribe hungry officials, power outages, rickety railway rolling stock, awful communications networks, over regulated economies, bureaucratic red tape, and dysfunctional legal systems, all contribute to the continents economic woes. These disincentives to business, together with high risk political instability, drive away direct foreign investment⁶⁵ and starve countries of much needed development capital inflows. The result? Africa is aid dependent and heavily indebted.

A social factor with economic repercussions is the flight of human capital from the continent. Tens of thousands of people with high level skills have left for greener pastures; doctors, engineers, lecturers, accountants and the like. A recent study of 10 African countries revealed an average loss of 40% of their graduates. About 80% of Ghana's doctors leave the country within 5 years of graduation.⁶⁶ The cost to the economy is hard to measure but a continent with a skills shortage to start with cannot but be badly hurt by this brain drain. On the bright side of this story is the fact that the diaspora remit approximately \$8 billion dollars annually back to Africa.

A cultural factor with economic implications is the fact that land is, in many cases, owned in community and thus individuals do not have this as a personal asset to offer as collateral security in order to raise capital for any micro enterprise.

⁶⁵ Foreign direct investment has increased recently due to Chinese involvement in Africa. The effects of that have yet to be seen. China's involvement has ended European and American complacency that Africa would always belong to their sphere of influence.

⁶⁶ *Mail and Guardian* 26th October 2007. Page 14

4.2.6.4 The fourth cluster of factors is geopolitical

This is meant not with reference to colonialism, but to the ravaging effect the cold war had on the continent. African countries were drawn into a series of proxy wars as the superpowers fought out their rivalries around the globe. For example South Africa invaded Angola to fight the Cubans on behalf of the United States. The first, democratically elected president of the Congo was overthrown with CIA and Belgian connivance because he was a socialist and in his place Mobuto Sese Seko began his rule of massive kleptocracy. This was the first of some 60 coups in Africa. In the infancy of African independence a sorry precedent was set. Many despots were given covert support for their wars in exchange for supporting one of the superpowers. Millions of Africans perished as a result. Large quantities of weapons, especially AK 47s, were left over from the Cold War era and fuel present day conflicts, although the supply of arms has been privatised. France is alleged to have supplied weapons and military advisers to the Hutu for their ghastly genocide of Tutsi and moderate Hutu in Rwanda in 1994.⁶⁷ We might add that Western countries self interest included economic interests as well as other political concerns.

We should note some slow but positive trends. The number of conflicts has declined by two thirds from the 1990s. Twenty five years ago there were only 3 proper democracies. Today there are some 40 democracies. Even if many of the elections were flawed, the trend does represent noteworthy progress. There is a greater willingness to take responsibility for conflicts within Africa. Peacekeeping today is not relegated to the

⁶⁷ See Roger Bowen 'Genocide in Rwanda-an Anglican Perspective' in Rittner, C, Roth, J. and W. Whitworth. *Genocide in Rwanda. Complicity of the Churches?* Page 46-47.

United Nations alone. African Union peacekeeping efforts are to be found in Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, The Darfur region of Sudan and Liberia. Efforts are underway to form regional economic groupings to increase cooperation and trade. The world demand for commodities that Africa has, is resulting in marked economic growth in some counties.

4.2.6.5 The fifth factor is the failure of leadership

The noted novelist Chinua Achebe wrote ‘The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership.’⁶⁸ African governments have failed their people. Leaders have been noted for crazy economic policies. Property rights were violated. The rule of law was ignored. Many leaders were blatantly predatory in enriching themselves by pillaging the government coffers. Unchecked power was a swift path to riches. Tribalism is easily exploited by leaders and leads to chronic instability and conflicts. This loyalty to clan and tribe spills over into nepotism, ensuring that incompetent people get important jobs. The result is a cult of mediocrity. If Africa were better governed it would be richer.

Many of the above factors create the conditions for conflicts to erupt. However “...the inability of governments to manage these issues without conflict reflects a core problem with the African state itself: that the state and its leadership is weak and insecure, and its response to challenges is through patronage, divide and rule tactics, and external aggression towards its neighbours” (Mills 2002. 95). Such a scenario is inimical of long term growth. When the state fails to govern properly, fails to provide strong institutions,

⁶⁸ Quoted in Robert Guest *The Shackled Continent. Africa's Past, Present and Future*. London: Macmillan, 2004.

fails to uphold the rule of law, fails to provide social services, fails to provide security, then the declines in the economic output will be inevitable and the *Human Development Index* rankings will slip (including measurements of infant mortality, adult literacy, maternal health and life expectancy).

An inescapable fact is the widespread corruption of many leaders. The World Bank estimates that stolen assets reduce the gross national product of Africa by 25%.⁶⁹ In resource-rich Nigeria nearly half of the population wallow in poverty, while a previous president is thought to have stolen between \$500 million and \$1500 million dollars from the treasury. Nigeria is the third most corrupt country as measured by Transparency International. Guinea has 25% of the worlds known reserves of bauxite as well as diamonds, gold, iron ore yet it is ranked 160 out of 177 countries on the Human Development Index. Why? “Poor governance, weak economic policies and poor infrastructure continue to be major obstacles to attracting much needed foreign investment. In addition, rampant corruption and impunity continue and political freedoms and human rights are diluted.”⁷⁰

In answer to the question ‘Why is Africa so poor?’ *The Economist*⁷¹ in a special survey of sub-Saharan Africa answers thus, “The best governed places will probably grow the fastest, so African politicians must get the basics right: spend within their means, pass sensible laws and see that they are enforced even-handedly. Until they do, nothing else will move.” This is not a lone voice. In the view of the *Report of the Commission for*

⁶⁹ *International Herald Tribune* 18th September 2007, page 4.

⁷⁰ ‘Declining Standards of Living’ in *Africa Today*. January 2007 pages 28-29.

⁷¹ *The Economist*. January 17th 2004.

Africa “One thing underlies all the difficulties caused by the interactions of Africa’s history over the past 40 years. It is the weakness of governance and the absence of an effective state. By governance we mean the inability of government and public services to create the right economic, social and legal framework which will encourage economic growth and allow poor people to participate in it” (Africa Report. 2005:28).

All of the above material supports the core idea behind the Gordon-Conwell D. Min. program, namely, that leadership is the key. The heart of the leader determines the heart of the organisation.

A pictorial classificatory model of the causal factors that is helpful is provided by Dr. P. Moll⁷². He divides the factors into four quadrants. The vertical axis is the degree of control the governments have (Uncontrollable, Controllable) and the location of the problem (External, Domestic) is plotted on the horizontal axis.

	External	Domestic
Uncontrollable		
Controllable		

⁷² Peter Moll ‘Why Did Africa Fall Behind?’ In *New SA Outlook*, Vol. 4, October 1999.

I would make one change to the diagram by making the internal lines dotted in order to show that the four quadrants are not watertight cells. In reality a host of factors interact dynamically with each other within the system. Nevertheless the diagram helps us to see that there are a variety of classifications of causes and goes some way to avoid offering simplistic solutions to complex problems.

All of the above discussion is full of doom and gloom but it is only one of the great realities of Africa. The other is the extraordinary numerical growth of the church. The social-economic realities undoubtedly impact the daily lives of Christians. They are killed in wars, they are poor, they become refugees, and they also fall ill, just like anyone else. The question for me is not the extent to which Christians are affected by their contexts, but to what extent do these millions of Christians make an impact on their contexts? To do this, Christian leaders and pastors need to be trained. The huge numbers of Christians in Africa could become agents of social change, certainly in their local setting if not nationally. This is a key assumption behind this thesis project. But to do this, ministers and laity need training and a sound biblical basis from which to proceed. We therefore turn now to critically examine the curricula of evangelical degree-conferring seminaries in Africa through the lens of contextualisation.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Having laid a solid foundation for the claims of Biblical holism and having looked at those elements that constitute the African realities, and having established the case for contextual theological education, we now turn our attention to a selection of evangelical theological colleges in sub-Saharan Africa to examine their curricula in terms of the preparation given to students to equip them to minister on this continent.

5.1 Research Questionnaire

5.1.1 Research method: objectives

The objectives of this piece of research were limited but clear.

- a) We wished to establish an understanding of how the presidents of the partner schools understood their African contexts.

- b) Following on from that, we wished to establish the extent to which the training given to students who were preparing for the pastoral ministry prepared them adequately to understand their African realities in order to be effective ministers within those contexts.

- c) Based on the analysis of the surveys we wished to establish the extent and nature of the problem and to make recommendations as to the way forward for the effective contextualisation of theological training.

5.1.2 Research method: selection of the seminaries to be surveyed

- The N size of the sample was 36. The 34 participating seminaries are all partners of the Overseas Council International. (See Appendix D for a list of participant seminaries.) Two seminaries that are not partners of Overseas Council also participated in the survey.
- They are all evangelical seminaries whose doctrinal statements are in broad agreement with the Lausanne Covenant and the World Evangelical Fellowship.
- They all offer undergraduate degrees and a few offer graduate programs as well. There are hundreds of lower level colleges that do important work at lower levels where the greatest numerical need is. Limits to this sample had to be set, in order to be manageable, at partner schools that relate to the Overseas Council.
- They were not liberal arts schools because the focus was on ministerial training for the church.
- There was wide regional representation from 20 countries covering sub-Saharan Africa. Overseas Council has, however, no partner schools in Tanzania, Malawi Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland and a number of Francophone countries where the Protestant church is very weak.
- There was representation of the three main international languages, namely English, French and Portuguese. There are, of course, hundreds of local languages, but the partner schools use one of the three international languages as their medium of instruction.

5.1.3 Research method: the survey instrument

The first questionnaire, called “A. African Realities”, was designed to establish the perception of the respondents towards a list of problems.

I drew on the four lists that were mentioned above to draw up a basic list of eleven realities. Respondents were asked to rate them on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being ‘disagree strongly’ and 5 being ‘agree strongly’. Because Africa is a vast continent with great diversity space was allowed at the end for respondents to add any issues that they believed were important, but that had been omitted. The eleven listed items were:

1. Health Issues (Including malaria, AIDS, and water born diseases)
2. War and Violence
3. Poverty and Unemployment
4. Rapid Urbanisation (Problems of slums, loss of traditional values and structures)
5. Bad or Corrupt Leaders (At various levels)
6. Family Breakdown
7. International Exploitation (Political and Economic)
8. Ethnicity (Tribalism and Racism)
9. Gender Issues (Unfair treatment of women, violence, sexual exploitation etc)
10. Untaught and Untransformed Professing Christians
11. It’s a continent of Young People

In addition, respondents were asked to:

List any other major issues that you think are African realities.

a)

b)

c)

The second questionnaire called 'B. Preparing Ministers for Ministry in Africa' contained the same list of eleven issues but this time respondents were asked to write brief notes alongside each issue in which they outlined what, if any, preparation was given in the curriculum to address the issue.

5.1.4 Research method: administration of the questionnaire

In June 2007 the Overseas Council held its annual series of three training 'Institutes of Excellence' for all the partner schools to which the presidents of the schools were invited. The first was in Lome, Togo for West Africa. The second was in Machakos, Kenya for East Africa and the third was in Cape Town, South Africa for Southern Africa. There was an excellent turn out. All the partners were represented by their presidents. I used this as a golden opportunity to administer the questionnaire in person. (In all likelihood there would have been a low percentage return had the questionnaire been posted out)

By administering the questionnaire in the same month a synchronic effect was achieved and thus eliminated any distortions of results due to long delays between the administration of the questionnaire in the different regions.

Time was set aside at the end of a training session during each Institute for me to administer the survey. I introduced the subject by asking for their help. Participation was voluntary. While the survey required the name of the school and the president to be filled in, they were assured that no school would be cited by name. A promise was given to send out the fruit of the research when the task had been completed. The introduction was designed to allay suspicions, enlist their wholehearted support and to encourage an honest response. The rating system was explained and provided and time was spent detailing what each of the listed realities meant. I remained in the room in order to field any questions.

The two questionnaires were administered separately. The first one was given out, filled out and returned before the second one was handed out in order to prevent any retroactive changes being made to fit in to the responses to the second survey. After a generous period of time the filled out surveys were collected and handed to me.

We achieved a 100% return! More than that, it generated a lot of interest. A few people even asked for a spare copy in order to take it back home to be discussed by their academic boards.

5.1.5 Research method: ethical issues

The informed consent of interviewees was obtained verbally. Because the presidents were all academics, they appreciated the nature of my research and willingly participated in the process.

The research will benefit the participants when the findings and recommendations are published. Moreover, the findings will be built into some of my training seminars that I offer to partner schools when I visit them annually.

I promised anonymity by not quoting any participant or seminary by name. My concern was to obtain the bigger statistical picture. Only I have access to the original data.

5.1.6 Research method: validity and reliability

The population sample of 36 was large enough to be statistically valid. It was, in fact, a unique sample of higher level evangelical seminaries in Africa. The sample was large enough to be able to draw conclusions about this section of evangelical theological education. There is no reason to doubt the honesty of the respondents because the surveys were kept confidential. The results of Survey A were analysed and given averages. Mathematically presented results, especially those to the first decimal point, provide a sense of confidence in the results, while the B Survey was a lot messier. The responses were written descriptions of the curricula contents and were much more difficult to classify and therefore quantify. It required my professional judgement and knowledge of

the schools to determine how the results were to be classified. Having said this, it is the writers view that the results are valid and reliable enough for us to establish a picture and to draw conclusions from this sample about theological education in Africa.

5.2 Data Analysis

5.2.1 The results of Survey A

The 37 respondents were asked to rate the African realities on a scale of 1-5. The values signify the following:

1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 =strongly agree

The results of the Survey A summarised below represent the weighted average score for each reality, ranked in order of agreement.

1.	Health	4.7
2.	Poverty and unemployment	4.4
3.	Bad or Corrupt Leaders	4.3
4.	A Continent of Young People	4.3
5.	Rapid Urbanization	4.1
6.	International Exploitation.	3.9
7.	Untaught Christians	3.8
8.	War and Violence	3.7
9.	Ethnicity	3.6
10.	Gender Issues.	3.6
11.	Family Breakdown.	3.1

The results show general agreement with the list of issues I had compiled. It is a relief to know that I was not wildly off target! They show a high degree of common understanding as to what constitutes the African reality. Items ranked 1 to 5 above, scored between 'agree and strongly agree' while items 6 to 11 score between neutral (3) and agree (4) but tending more towards the score of 4. There was surprisingly no average dissenting score below 3. There were some scores of 1 and 2 but these were too few to affect the average.

This result made life easier because we did not have to deal with widely divergent perceptions. This high degree of congruence will form the platform from which to proceed to the next questionnaire.

When the responses were analysed by regions, West, East and Southern Africa, there was overall a pattern of general agreement- except for one item. The item on 'Family Breakdown' revealed the greatest divergence. The overall average score on this item was 3.1, but the Southern Africa group averaged 3.9 while West and East Africa averaged 2.6 and 2.7 respectively. The reason for this is, I think, that Southern Africa began to industrialise 150 years ago. With the opening up of diamond and gold mines from the 1880s, a system of migratory labour commenced. Mines and commercial agriculture needed unskilled labour and the migrants were housed in 'bachelor' (sic) quarters while the families remained behind in the rural areas. Workers would return home once a year over Christmas to see their families. Casual sex and children born out of marriage resulted. Workers were recruited from all the surrounding Southern African countries thus

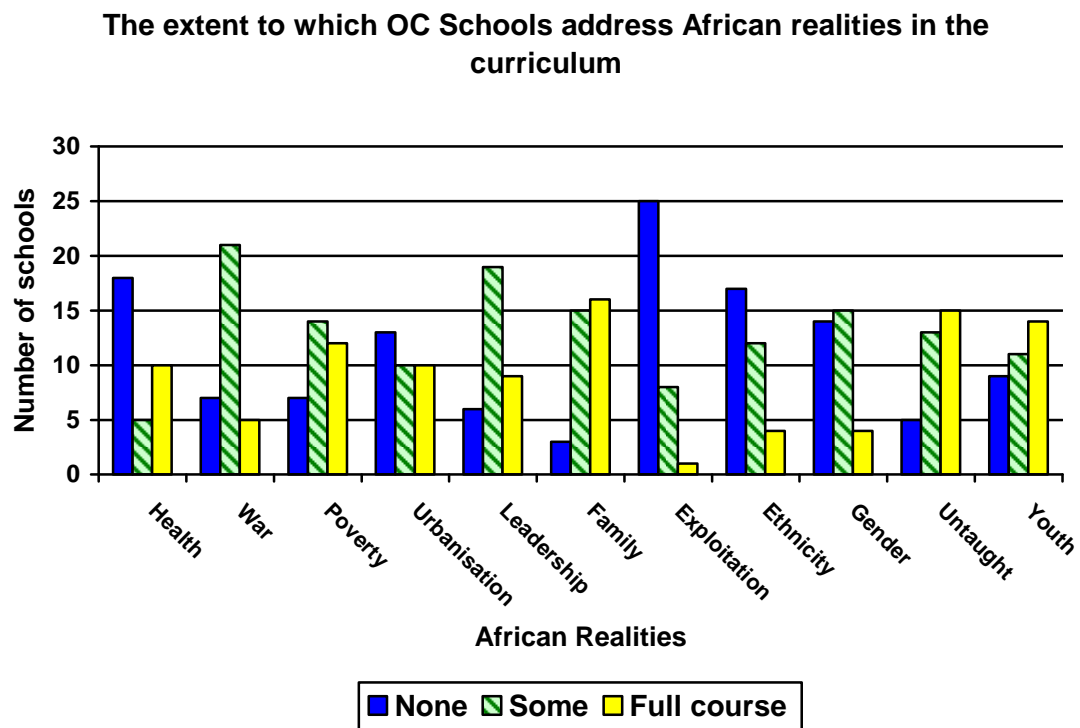
widening the geographic extent of the effects on the family. After 1948, the system of apartheid further exacerbated the problem in South Africa. This ideology held that the cities belonged to whites and that blacks were temporarily present only to sell their labour. A century of migratory labour has shattered family life in Southern Africa. Let it be noted that rapid urban drift in the rest of Africa will soon have a major destabilising effect on the family.

Before passing on to the second survey, we need to note that respondents were asked to add any other major issues that they thought were African realities. The analysis of this data shows that there were only a few issues that attracted a significant number of responses. Environmental concerns, including desertification and global warming, received 7 mentions. Poor education and high illiteracy rates received 4 mentions. But for the rest there were 15 different subjects that received one or two votes each. They included refugees, exploitation of children, Islam, technology gap, African traditional religions, the brain drain, famine and food security, lack of African Christian scholarship, poor infrastructure, xenophobia (which really should have been put under 'ethnicity' in the main section of the questionnaire), poor work ethic. It is a great list of topics, but clearly they are not widely held dominant concerns.

It therefore appears that the main issues that constitute the African reality had been correctly isolated.

5.2.2 The results of Survey B

This survey elicited from the presidents what their seminaries curricula were teaching that addresses the African context. To classify the results, the responses were divided into three groups: 'Nothing', 'Some level of response', and 'A full semester course'. The first and last were easy to categorise but the middle one was a problem. This was due to different interpretations of the length of a lecture, or to what was meant by 'a seminar', or when the response was 'part of the course in ethics', or 'students write a paper on the subject'. I was left with imprecise data. It therefore seemed right to gather all of these partial responses into one category. Even allowing for a measure of imprecision, a definite picture emerged as is displayed in the graph below.



The best responses in the curricula were to Family issues, to Youth and to Untaught Christians (the matter relates to training for discipleship). The greatest neglect was with respect to the issues of international exploitation (despite there being a strong response to this item in Survey A), ethnicity, gender issues and health. This is alarming given that these matters are core issues in Africa. The neglect of gender issues, though regrettable, is perhaps not surprising given that Africa is largely patriarchal and that most of the presidents and faculty are males. A closer examination of the responses to health issues reveals the greatest range with ten schools having full courses on the subject, which was a relatively good figure, while seventeen had nothing at all. The middle column shows that schools had some level of response to an issue. How good the content is and how effectively taught it is is unknown.

From the data we are able to conclude that there has been some attempt to address some of our African realities. The curricula are not completely decontextualised. There have been attempts to contextualise the training given to students preparing for ministry. But this response appears to be inconsistent, partial and haphazard. If a particular subject is addressed in many different courses it has the advantage of reinforcing the points on a multi disciplinary basis. But, equally, it suffers the disadvantage of lacking focus with depth. There is definitely much room for improvement if the partner schools are to fulfil the challenges in the ICETE 'Manifesto on the Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education' and the 'Nairobi Manifesto'.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS, REFLECTIONS AND PLANNED OUTCOMES

The threads of this dissertation will be drawn together by reflecting on the personal learnings of the writer in three sections.

6.1 Discoveries and Conclusions

6.1.1 Glorious periods in the history of evangelicalism

There have been some glorious periods in the history of evangelicalism when leading figures such as Wilberforce and Shaftsbury beautifully balanced concerns for justice with the need for evangelism in a powerful demonstration of biblical holism.

6.1.2 Upheavals in the United States in the early twentieth century

The upheavals in the United States in the early twentieth century, sparked by the clash of modernism with fundamentalism and the later bitter struggles as evangelicalism distinguished itself from fundamentalism, left deep scars that caused the ‘great reversal’ away from social engagement to a dominant dualistic pietism.

6.1.3 The centre of gravity of the evangelical world mission movement

The centre of gravity of the evangelical world mission movement, having shifted from Europe to the United States by the early twentieth century, therefore imbibed and transmitted this dualism to the ‘mission field’ and to the national churches resulting from

the success of the missionary endeavours. When the wave of uhuru (decolonisation and ‘freedom’) began forty to fifty years ago, mission agencies allowed their mission churches to become independent national churches. The last bastion of expatriate control remained in the theological colleges and seminaries which were too expensive for the nationals to run. As a result the theological concerns, content and styles of Western evangelicalism were perpetuated longer in the arena of theological education than in national churches. However, that has changed. Of the 34 seminaries linked to the Overseas Council all but one has a national in leadership and all have national boards.

6.1.4 Western literature on evangelicalism

The Western literature on evangelicalism tends not to address the subject of faith missions as an important feature of the evangelical movement which had its own distinctive characteristics and impact. One has to turn to missiologists and mission historians do some justice to this subject however.

6.1.5 A paradigm shift over the past fifty years

The numerical centre of gravity of the world church has shifted over the past fifty years from the ‘first world’ to the ‘third world’. The great bulk of this growth is among evangelicals/pentecostals. This majority world church has yet to find its own voice. It needs to define itself and not rely so heavily on literature from the West. The absence of writings on evangelicalism by third world evangelicals was striking. Would they characterise evangelical beliefs and distinctives in quite the same way, I wonder as Stott, McGrath, Tidball and Noll?

6.1.6 The need for the evangelical church in Africa to develop its own theological responses

But more importantly the evangelical Church in Africa has to develop its own theological response to its particular realities and challenges. This is where the theological models of biblical holism become particularly pertinent because they will enable Africans to relate the text of the Word of God to their context. The Church will need to develop its own theological methodologies that spring from a more engaged and committed position and less from a philosophical or abstract construction. Without the long tradition of academic theology as pertains in the West, perhaps a majority world theology will start from ‘below’, listening to the voice of the laity and to the needs of the church at the grass roots. Textbooks need to be written by Africans that engage with the African continent because Western texts are often not helpful. (A text book on youth in Africa may have to consider child-headed households resulting from AIDS deaths, child soldiers, and exploitative child labour, for example.)

6.1.7 The ICAA Manifesto

The ICAA Manifesto on the Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education was written in 1983, 25 years ago. While progress in response to the challenges contained in the Manifesto is evident in the schools that I visit, there is a long way to go yet if the twelve concerns are to be accomplished. While the concern of this thesis project was

limited to the first concern, that is, for a theology that engages with the contexts, the other eleven challenges constitute a whole package of concerns that need to be accomplished.

6.1.8 A sound theological basis for holistic ministry

After writing the chapter on the theological models for biblical holism, it was surprising to see the powerful collective argument they make. I had not realised at first that the four models came from different theological disciplines, New Testament (Viv Grigg), Old Testament (Chris Wright), Systematic Theology (John Stott) and Missiology (David Bosch), which together buttress my case surprisingly well. The author feels confident in the biblical veracity of the models, believing that they are true to core evangelical beliefs. A sound theological basis has been established for holistic ministry. This is the most important statement to make about this dissertation.

6.1.9 A strong foundation for evangelical scholars

These models could provide a strong foundation for evangelical scholars to build upon when wrestling with justice issues, poverty, the environment, gender and race, economics, the land, as well as the classic concerns for evangelism and discipleship. This work could be used to under gird and inform the emerging courses in our partner seminaries on development and AIDS. As seminaries redesign their curricula to more adequately prepare their students for a ministry of *transformational leadership*, so models of biblical holism will be needed to replace the world denying dualism of our past.

6.2 Personal Reflections

Over the past two years the writer became deeply immersed in this thesis-project with all the reading, thinking and writing that it entailed, and was touched by the whole process (and stressed!).

6.2.1 Personal insights

The writer came to realise how much of his reading came from books he had collected over the past thirty years. This indicates that he had been grappling with these issues for most of his working life. Over that period there had been a lot of confusion and distress as he tried to find a way forward theologically for himself, in opposition to his unhelpful evangelical sub-culture, while trying to remain true to revealed scripture. The distress was not just at a cognitive level but especially at a relational level when feeling alienated because others thought that he had ‘gone political’. The concerns that gave birth to this topic are clearly rooted in his ministry experience of living in South Africa under an unjust apartheid regime. He experienced once again some of those buried emotions as he reflected on the past. So this project has been a personal journey of revisiting the past, and of reflection, as it pulled together the theological threads of the writer’s own pilgrimage. He has appreciated the, unintended, opportunity to do this.

We do so wish that he had had the benefit of this research some 30 years ago! It would have given much needed confidence that he was on the right track. For this reason, he would like to make this research available to others to help them as they grapple with major problems in their contexts.

6.2.2 Boundaries

The topic of the research was simple and concisely focussed enough, but each section presented the temptation to go off onto sidetracks that would have buried the main thrust under a mountain of extra words. The writer had to decide not to expand on American evangelicalism for its own sake, even though there is a lot of literature available, in order to retain the focus on evangelicalism in the majority world. He decided not to expand on the many competing causal theories, nor to amplify descriptions of Africa's woes. He had also to restrain himself from being sidetracked into theories of curriculum design and related educational matters, much as he would have loved to do so because he is an educationalist at heart.

6.3 Planned Outcomes

This research has not been 'blue sky' abstract research. Rather, it has related closely to the authors ministry and vocation which relates to theological education in Africa. The sincere hope therefore is that the benefit of this thesis-project will extend to others as well. My longing is to serve the Lord, to be true to His word, to do the work of His kingdom and so to live to the praise of His glory.

6.3.1 Publish and distribute

If this work is found to be valid and valuable, and if the Lord spares me, I would intend to publish the theological models part of it in booklet form for wide distribution to all 110 partner schools of the Overseas Council International, to Christian relief agencies,

Christian activists, and mission societies. Perhaps it could be used in the theological education track when Lausanne 3 meets in 2010 in Cape Town because their focus will be on a theology of mission that is integral and holistic. Elements of this dissertation could therefore be of considerable usefulness. All of the partner seminaries, by being in the majority world, face broadly similar socio-economic and social challenges. Biblical holism is relevant to them all.

Perhaps, an article could find its way into the Evangelical Missions Quarterly or the Evangelical Review of Theology in order to enjoy a wider readership.

6.3.2 Promote and teach

As I travel to the 34 partner schools in my region of Africa, I will present the theological models and engage the faculty in discussions on the subject in the hope that they will be persuaded to use the models, and where applicable, in their classes.

The writer's interest in curriculum design will continue as he encourages partner schools to change their curricula in order to engage in more transformational ways with the realities of their contexts in Africa in keeping with the ICAA Manifesto on the Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education and the Nairobi Manifesto. They will need help and encouragement to move forward into unknown territory.

6.3.3 Write course materials

Consideration will be given to writing a booklet in which the sections related to the description of the main ‘African realities’ and to the causes of Africa’s woes will be treated more comprehensively. Space did not permit the writer to argue different sides of the theories. Nor did we amplify and document in detail the many facts and figures related to each of those realities. A booklet could become useful reading material to support a course on ‘understanding Africa’. This would be supported by a reading list and useful web sites so that lecturers might access more information for themselves. Most evangelical seminaries have no concept of doing social analysis. Such writing could prime the pumps and get them started.

In closing: - ‘**The Prayer for Africa**’⁷³

God bless Africa

Guard her children,

Guide her leaders

And grant her peace, for Jesus Christ’s sake.

Amen.

⁷³ Attributed to Father Trevor Huddleston a noted anti-apartheid campaigner and the author in 1956 of *Naught For Your Comfort..*

APPENDIX A

MANIFESTO ON THE RENEWAL OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Introduction

We who serve within evangelical theological education throughout the world today, and who find ourselves now linked together in growing international co-operation, wish to give united voice to our longing and prayer for the renewal of evangelical theological education today – for a renewal in form and substance, a renewal in vision and power, a renewal in commitment and direction.

We rightly seek such renewal in light of the pivotal significance of theological education in biblical perspective. Insofar as theological education concerns the formation of leadership for the church of Christ in its mission, to that extent theological education assumes a critically strategic biblical importance. Scripture mandates the church, it mandates leadership service within the church, and it thereby as well mandates a vital concern with the formation of such leadership. For this reason the quest for effective renewal in evangelical theological education in our day is a biblically generated quest.

We rightly seek such renewal in light also of the crisis of leadership in the Church of Christ around the world. The times are weighted with unusual challenge and unusual opportunity, demanding of the Church exceptional preparation of its leadership. In many areas the Church is faced with surging growth, of such proportions that it cannot always cope. In many areas the Church is also faced with open hostility without and hidden subversion within, distracting and diverting it from its calling. Everywhere the opportunities and challenges take on new and confusing forms. The times demand an urgent quest for the renewal of theological education patterns, so that the Church in its leadership may be equipped to fulfil its high calling under God.

We rightly seek such renewal also in light of the condition of evangelical theological education in our day. We recognize among ourselves exciting examples of that renewed vitality in theological education which we desire to see everywhere put to the service of our Lord. Things are being done right within the traditional patterns and within non-traditional patterns, which need attention, encouragement, and emulation. We also recognise that there are examples in our midst, usually all too close at hand, where things are not being done right. We confess this with shame. Traditional forms are being maintained only because they are traditional, and radical forms pursued only because they are radical- and the formation of effective leadership for the Church of Christ is deeply hindered. We heartily welcome the wise critiques of evangelical theological education which have arisen in recent times, which have forced us to think much more carefully both about our purposes in theological education and about the best means for achieving

those purposes. We believe that there is now emerging around the world a wide consensus among evangelical theological educators that a challenge to renewal is upon us, and upon us from our Lord. We believe that there is also emerging a broad agreement on the central patterns that such a renewal should take. New times are upon us, and new opportunities. We wish to pursue those opportunities, and seize them, in obedience to our Lord.

Therefore, in order to provide encouragement, guidance, and critical challenge to ourselves and to all others who may look to us for direction, we wish to assert and endorse the following agenda for the renewal of evangelical theological education world-wide today, and to pledge ourselves to its practical energetic implementation. We do not pretend to ourselves that we are here setting forth either a full or a final word on these matters. But we do make this expression after extended prayerful reflection, and we wish to offer the hand of warm friendship to all those who might likewise feel led to endorse these proposals, and to express to them an invitation to practical collaboration in this quest, for the sake of Jesus Christ our lord, the evangelization of the world and the edification of the Church.

Therefore, we now unitedly affirm that, to fulfil its God-given mandate, evangelical theological education today world-wide must vigorously seek to introduce and reinforce:

1. Contextualization

Our programs of theological education must be designed with deliberate reference to the contexts in which they serve. We are at fault that our curricula so often appear either to have been imported whole from abroad, or to have been handed down unaltered from the past. The selection of courses for the curriculum, and the content of every course in the curriculum, must be specifically suited to the context of service. To become familiar with the context in which the biblical message is to be lived and preached is no less vital to a well-rounded programme than to become familiar with the content of that biblical message. Indeed, not only in what is taught, but also in structure and operation our theological programmes must demonstrate that they exist in and for their own context, in government and administration, in finance, in reading styles and class assignments in library resources and student services. This we must analyze by God's grace.

2. Churchward orientation

Our programmes of theological education must orientate themselves pervasively in terms of the Christian community being served. We are at fault when our programmes operate merely in terms of some traditional or personal notion of theological education. At every level of design and operation our programmes must be visibly determined by a close attentiveness to the needs and expectations of the Christian community we serve. To this end we must establish multiple modes of ongoing contact and interaction between programme and church, both at official and at grass-roots levels, and regularly adjust and develop the programme in light of these contacts. Our theological programmes must

become manifestly of the Church, through the Church, and for the Church. This we must accomplish, by God's grace.

3. Strategic flexibility

Our programmes of theological education must nurture a much greater strategic flexibility in carrying out their task. Too long we have been content to serve the formation of only one type of leader for the church, at only one level of need, by only one educational approach. If we are to serve fully the leadership needs of the Body of Christ, then our programmes singly and in combination, must begin to demonstrate much greater flexibility in at least three respects. First, we must attune ourselves to the full range of leadership *roles* required, and not attend to the most familiar or most basic. To provide for pastoral formation, for example, is not enough. We must respond creatively, in co-operation with other programmes, to the Church's leadership needs also in areas such as Christian education, youth work, evangelism, journalism and communications, TEE, counselling, denominational and para-church administration, seminary and Bible school staffing, community development, and social outreach. Secondly, our programmes must learn to take account of all academic *levels* of need, and not become frozen in serving at only one level. We must not presume that the highest level of training is the only strategic need, or conversely that the lowest level is the only strategic need. We must deliberately participate in multi-level approaches to leadership training, worked out on the basis of an assessment of the Church's leadership needs at all levels. Thirdly, we must embrace a greater flexibility in the educational *modes* by which we touch the various levels of leadership need, and not limit our approach to a single traditional or radical pattern. We must learn to employ, in practical combination with others, both residential and extension systems, both formal and non-formal styles, as well, for example, as short term courses, workshops, night school programmes, vacation institutes, in-service training, travelling seminars, refresher courses, and continuing education programmes. Only by such flexibility in our programmes can the Church's full spectrum of leadership needs to be met, and we ourselves become true to our full mandate. This we must accomplish, by God's grace.

4. Theological grounding

Evangelical theological education as a whole today needs earnestly to pursue and recover a thorough-going theology of theological education. We are at fault that we so readily allow our bearings to be set for us by the latest enthusiasms, or by secular rationales, or by sterile traditions. It is not sufficient that we attend to the context of our service, and to the Christian community being served. We must come to perceive our task, and even these basic points of reference, within the larger setting of God's total truth and total plan. Such a shared theological perception of our calling is largely absent from our midst. We must together take immediate and urgent steps to seek, elaborate, and possess a biblically-informed theological basis for our calling in theological education, and allow every aspect of our service to become rooted and nurtured in this soil. This we must accomplish by God's grace.

5. Continuous assessment

Our programme of theological education must be dominated by a rigorous practice of identifying objectives, assessing outcomes, and adjusting programmes accordingly. We have been too easily satisfied with educational intentions that are unexpressed, or only superficially examined, or too general to be of directional use. We have been too ready to assume our achievements on the basis of vague impressions, chance reports or crisis-generated inquiries. We have been culpably content with evaluating our programmes only irregularly, or haphazardly, or under stress. We hear our Lord's stern word of the faithful stewardship He requires in His servants, but we have largely failed to apply this to the way we conduct our programmes of theological education. First, we must allow our programmes to be governed by objectives carefully chosen, clearly defined and continuously renewed. Secondly, we must accept it as a duty, and not merely as beneficial, to discern and evaluate the results of our programmes, so there may be a valid basis for judging the degree to which intentions are being achieved. This requires that we institute means of reviewing the actual performance of our graduates in relation to our stated objectives. Thirdly, we must build into the normal operational patterns of our programmes a regular review and continual modification and adjustment of all aspects of governance, staffing, educational programme, facilities and student services, so that actual achievements might be brought to approximate more and more closely our stated objectives. Only by such provisions for continuous assessment can we be true to the rigorous demands of biblical stewardship. This we must accomplish, by God's grace.

6. Community life

Our programmes of theological education must demonstrate the Christian pattern of community. We are at fault that our programmes so often seem little more than Christian academic factories, efficiently producing graduates. It is biblically incumbent upon us that our programmes function as deliberately nurtured Christian educational communities, sustained by those modes of community that are biblically commended and culturally appropriate. To this end it is not merely decorative but biblically essential that the whole educational body, staff and students, not only learn together, but play and eat and care and worship and work together. This we must accomplish, by God's grace.

7. Integrated programme

Our programmes of theological education must combine spiritual and practical with academic objectives in one holistic integrated educational approach. We are at fault that we so often focus education requirements narrowly on cognitive attainments, while we hope for student growth in other dimensions but leave it largely to chance.

Our programmes must be designed to attend to the growth and equipping of the whole man of God. This means, firstly, that our educational programmes must deliberately seek and expect spiritual formation of the student. We must look for a spiritual development centred in total commitment to the Lordship of Christ, progressively worked outward by the power of the Spirit into every department of life. We must devote as much time and care and structural designing to facilitate this type of growth as we readily and rightly provide for cognitive growth. This also means, secondly, that our programmes must seek

and expect achievement in the practical skills of Christian leadership. We must not any longer only introduce these skills within a classroom setting. We must incorporate into our educational arrangements and requirements a guided practical field experience in precisely those skills which the student will need to employ in service after completion of the programme. We must provide adequately supervised and monitored opportunities for practical vocational field experience. We must blend practical and spiritual with academic in our educational programmes, and thus equip the whole man of God for service. This we must accomplish, by God's grace.

8. Servant moulding

Through our programmes of theological education students must be moulded to styles of leadership appropriate to their intended biblical role within the body of Christ. We are to be blamed that our programmes so readily produce the characteristics of servanthood. We must not merely hope that the true marks of Christian servanthood will appear. We must actively promote biblically-approved styles of leadership, through modelling by staff, and through active encouragement, practical exposition, and deliberate reinforcement. This we must accomplish, by God's grace.

9. Instructional variety

Our programmes of theological education must vigorously pursue the use of a variety of educational teaching methodologies, evaluated and promoted in terms of their demonstrated effectiveness, especially with respect to the particular cultural context. It is not right to be fixed in one method merely because it is traditional, or familiar, or even avant-garde. Lecturing is by no means the only appropriate teaching method, and frequently by no means the best. Presumably neither is programmed instruction. Our programmes need to take practical steps to introduce and train their staff in new methods of instructions, in a spirit of innovative flexibility and experimentation, always governed by the standard of effectiveness.

10. A Christian mind

Our programmes of theological education need much more effectively to model and inculcate pattern of holistic thought, that is openly and wholesomely centred around biblical truth as the integrating core of reality. It is not enough merely to teach an accumulation of theological truths. Insofar as every human culture is governed at its core by an integrating worldview, our programmes must see that the rule of our Lord is planted at that point in the life of the student. This vision of the theologically integrated life needs to be so lived and taught in our programmes that we may say and show in a winsomely biblical manner that theology does indeed matter, and students may go forth experiencing this centring focus in all its biblical richness and depth. This we must accomplish, by God's grace.

11. Equipping for growth

Our programmes of theological education need urgently to refocus their patterns of training toward encouraging and facilitating self-directed learning. It is not enough that through our programmes we bring a student to a state of preparedness for ministry. We need to design academic requirements so that we are equipping the student not only to complete the course but also for a lifetime of ongoing learning and development and growth. To this end we must also assume a much greater role in the placement of our students, as part of our proper duty, and experiment in ways of maintaining ongoing supportive links and services with the student after graduation, especially in the early years of ministry. By these means each student should come to experience through the programme not the completion of a development but the launching of an ongoing development. This we must accomplish, by God's grace.

12. Cooperation

Our programmes of theological education must pursue contact and collaboration among themselves, for mutual support, encouragement, edification, and cross-fertilization. We are at fault that so often in evangelical theological education we attend merely to our own assignments under God. Others in the same calling need us; and we need them. The biblical notion of mutuality needs to be much more visibly expressed and pragmatically pursued among our theological programmes. Too long we have acquiesced in an isolation of effort that denies the larger body of Christ, thus failing both ourselves and Christ's body. The times in which we serve, no less than biblical expectations, demand of each of us active ongoing initiatives in cooperation. This we must accomplish, by God's grace.

May God help us to be faithful to those affirmations and commitments, to the glory of God and for the fulfilments of His purpose.

APPENDIX B

THE NAIROBI MANIFESTO ON THE RENEWAL OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN AFRICA January 1998

We as theological educators in Africa and as international partners in that effort do solemnly declare our commitment to the renewal of theological education on this continent. We recognize that the centre of Christianity continues to shift to the southern hemisphere in general and to the African continent in particular. Consequently, we recognize the great responsibility given to us by our Lord to entrust the gospel to reliable men and women whom God can use to produce strength and beauty in the African church. We confess that we have too often been bound to traditional methods of training that have not always been effective in producing capable leaders. In light of these commitments and in the spirit of the 1983 ICAA Manifesto we do solemnly resolve by God's grace to be agents of renewal in our schools and training programmes in four strategic areas:

1. *Relevance to the African Context.* We affirm our commitment to be sensitive to African realities in our curricula and programmes. We agree with the ICAA Manifesto that "we are at fault that our curricula so often appear either to have been imported whole from abroad or to have been handed down unaltered from the past." The particular issues that need to be addressed include poverty, AIDS, modernity, ethnicity, urbanization and justice. The kind of relevant theological education we envision will:

- Train men and women to facilitate change in society.
- Contextualise every course in the curriculum.

God enabling us, the particular strategies we will use to address these issues include:

- Engaging in a further study of Scriptural teaching on the issues facing the African church.
- Empowering teachers to contextualise both course content and methods of teaching.
- Increasing the numbers of African faculty.
- Involving students in appropriate service in church and community as part of their training.
- Exchanging faculty, ideas and resources regularly to stimulate change in the issues facing us.

2. *Servant moulding.* We affirm our commitment to train servant leaders not 'big bosses'. With the ICAA Manifesto we confess that our programmes "so readily

produce the characteristics of elitism and so rarely produce the marks of Christian servanthood”. The kind of servant moulding we envision will:

- Redefine the nature of quality leadership both inside and outside the church. This is our central concern. We must rethink the nature of authority, structures, accountability, team-leadership, openness to criticism, the expectation of different parties, leadership styles and enabling of others.
- Exploring leadership questions not only on the higher education level but also on the level of family, church and society.
- Recognize that leadership training requires a variety of means (textbooks, mentoring, and hands-on experience).
- Assist those in leadership positions to develop administrative, professional skills.
- Foster greater rapport between both older and younger leaders and greater toleration for different styles of servant leadership.

God enabling us, the particular strategies we will use to address these issues include:

- Emphasising spiritual formation of our students in order to instil the inner qualities necessary for servant leadership.
- Modelling by both faculty and administration of the leadership styles, structures, and relationships that we intend to promote.
- Incorporating the teaching of servanthood into both the classroom and practical aspects of the curriculum such as internships and team projects. This teaching should include instruction in the skills of administration and management.
- Assign students to work as interns in the church and in Christian organizations where they can receive mentoring.

3. *Integrated programmes.* We affirm our commitment to shape programmes that will help our students acquire spiritual depth and practical skills alongside academic and theological knowledge. We confess the “we so often focus education requirements narrowly on cognitive attainments, while we hope for student growth in other dimensions but leave it largely to chance” (ICAA Manifesto) The kind of integrated programmes and curricula we envision involves:

- Train students holistically in scholarship, piety, and maturity.
- Foster the discipline of reflection and the skills of facilitating growth in self and others.
- Encourage interaction between academic knowledge and community needs.
- Pursue on-going improvement in our programmes, never satisfied with the status quo.
- Labour with the church to accomplish her mission.

God enabling us, the particular strategies we will use to address these issues include:

- Modelling the integration of scholarship, piety, and ministry engagement which we seek in our students and for which we pray.
 - Developing training goals which begin with the desired character qualities and ministry skills, rather than with course content.
 - Recognizing and incorporating into curriculum planning all the ways that training impacts the life of the student, including chapel programs, small group experiences, and community life.
 - Drawing on expertise in education and curriculum development present in the institution or in the larger educational community.
 - Conferring with alumni and other constituencies to assess training effectiveness and to inform curriculum decisions.
 - Encouraging innovative ideas and sharing institutional resources, including faculty exchange.
 - Networking with our constituency communities to provide opportunities for cooperative service.
4. *Churchward orientation.* We admit that many times our schools have operated in ways unresponsive to the Christian community that we seek to serve. We desire to build bridges between the church and the academy, locally and internationally, so that our programmes become “manifestly of the church, through the church, and for the church” (ICAA Manifesto). The kind of churchward orientation we envision will:
- Identify appropriate partnerships.
 - Share financial, human, technological, and material resources.
 - Move from dependence towards independence.
 - Foster dialogue between all partners, including different institutions and denominations.

God enabling us, the particular strategies we will use to address these issues include:

- Admitting the poverty of our past strategies in producing meaningful partnership and exploring new ways forward.
- Networking with the international church and institutions through the internet (including email and websites).
- Using alumni as resources, domestically and internationally, to promote mutual understanding.
- Developing more effective internships in local church context.

We conclude with the recognition that our commitment to renewal and evaluation must be ongoing. We affirm the need to depend daily upon our Lord and his body and to work in cooperation with one another in Africa and with our partners internationally to accomplish the above resolutions. We affirm the need for each of our schools to form and implement institutional action plans that respond to this manifesto. We pledge ourselves to labour faithfully as God enables us until that great day when the Church appears before her Lord, “without a spot or blemish.”

APPENDIX C
THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Dear Colleague,

I am doing some research for a D Min and I need your help. Please fill in your response to the questions below. There is no 'right or wrong' answer. In the thesis, no one will be mentioned by name - I need only the big statistical picture.

With many thanks,
Bill Houston.

Your Name.....Your Seminary.....

A. AFRICAN REALITIES

The list has been compiled from a number of sources. Rate your response on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being 'disagree strongly' and 5 being 'agree strongly'.

1. Health issues (Including malaria, AIDS and water born diseases.)
2. War and Violence
3. Poverty and Unemployment.
4. Rapid Urbanisation (With the attendant problems of slums, loss of traditional values and structures).
5. Bad or Corrupt Leaders (At various levels)
6. Family Breakdown.
7. International Exploitation (Political and Economic)
8. Ethnicity (Tribalism and Racism)
9. Gender Issues (Unfair treatment of women, violence, sexual exploitation etc)
10. Untaught and untransformed professing Christians.
11. It's a continent of Young People.

This is probably not a complete list. List any other major issues that you think are African realities.

a)

b)

c)

Your Name..... Your Seminary.....

B. PREPARING MINISTERS FOR MINISTRY IN AFRICA

How does the **curriculum** of your seminary **intentionally address any of the realities** listed above? Write a note next to each item in which you state what your seminary does by way of lectures or practical assignments e.g. 1 class hour lecture; or A Whole semester course; or, nothing.

Health Issues.

War and Violence

Poverty and Unemployment.

Rapid Urbanisation.

Bad and Corrupt Leaders.

Family Breakdown.

International Exploitation.

Ethnicity.

Untaught Christians.

Gender Issues.

Young People.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

I will give you feedback on the results in due course.

W J Houston.

APPENDIX D

LIST OF PARTICIPATING SEMINARIES

The seminaries that participated in the survey are listed in alphabetical order of the country of origin.

Angola

Evangelical Theological Seminary of Lubango

Central African Republic

Bangui Evangelical School of Theology

Chad

ESTES School of Evangelical Theology

Congo

Protestant Theological Seminary of Brazzaville

Cote d' Ivoire

Alliance Seminary of West Africa

Democratic Republic of Congo

Bunia Theological Seminary

Ethiopia

Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology

Evangelical Theological College

Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary

Ghana

Ghana Christian University

Kenya

International Christian Ministries

Kenya Highlands Bible College

Nairobi Evangelical School of Theology

Nairobi International School of Theology

Scott Theological College

Liberia

Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary

Mozambique

Mozambique Graduate School of Theology

Namibia

Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary

Nigeria

ECWA Theological Seminary, Igbaja

Jos ECWA Theological Seminary

Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary

Rwanda

FATER

Senega

ITES.

Sierra Leone

The Evangelical College of Theology

South Africa

Africa School of Missions

Bible Institute of South Africa

Cornerstone Christian college

Cape Town Baptist Seminary

Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa

George Whitefield College

South African Theological Seminary

Togo

West African Theological Seminary

Uganda

Kampala Evangelical School of Theology

Zambia

Justo Mwale Theological College

Theological College of Central Africa

Zimbabwe

Theological College of Zimbabwe

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